

Luke, the Jews, and the Politics of Early Christian Identity

by

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Graduate Program in Religion
Duke University

Date: July 18, 2018

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the nature of early Christian identity in relation to non-Christian Jewish alterity as these are portrayed in the Gospel of Luke. Recent study of the relationships among Jews and Christians in the first centuries of the Common Era has been marked by an increasing awareness of the substantial overlap that existed between what would emerge only later as clearly delineated “Jewish” and “Christian” identities. The study of the so-called “parting of the ways” between Jews and Christians has thus opened up new avenues for inquiry into questions that were once thought, at least by New Testament scholars, to be settled by paradigms that are now roundly judged to be unsatisfactory. However, these developments in the study of early Jewish/Christian relations have not yet prompted an adequate reinvestigation of the place of the Lukan writings within the conflicts and convergences of early Jewish and early Christian life. This dissertation therefore examines Luke’s Gospel as both a theological text and an historical artifact in the light of the question of how early Christian identity was conceived in relation to early Christian conceptualizations of Jewish identity. It seeks to explain the theology of Israel exhibited in the Lukan narrative and to situate this theological narrative within its historical setting in a manner that sheds light on both the author’s mode of explicating religious identity and alterity and the otherwise shadowy history of earliest Jewish/Christian relations.

Methodologically, this study utilizes standard tools of biblical criticism, including historical and literary approaches. Source-critical and redaction-critical analyses are combined with historical-critical reflection on early Christianity, early Jewish/Christian relations, and the gospel tradition in order to evaluate the socio-rhetorical nature of Luke's presentation of Christian and non-Christian Jewish identities. Through this exegetical analysis, I argue that the orientation toward non-Christian Jewish others in Gospel of Luke (along with the Acts of the Apostles, which is treated in connection with Luke's gospel throughout) is not adequately described by standard theories of identity construction in early Christianity, in which Christian identity is said to have taken shape historically as the church distanced itself socially from non-Christian Jews and formulated its self-understanding in contradistinction to its constructed image of a denigrated non-Christian Jewish alterity. Against this model, I argue that Luke's theological presentation of Christian and non-Christian Jewish identities exhibits a consistent parallelism in Luke's call to the church and to those outside its community to repent and gather with Jesus in the face of coming judgment. I argue further that this rhetorical characteristic of Luke's gospel is best accounted for by positing a social context in which the evangelist lived in close proximity to both the Christian church, which he called to greater faithfulness, and to non-Christian Jews, whom he called to repent and sought to persuade to accept his vision of the fulfillment of hopes of Israel in Jesus of Nazareth.

For Tosha

אשת חיל ורעה אהבה

and for Zoe and Ari

ὕμεις γάρ ἐστε ἡ δόξα ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ χαρά

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1. Introduction

This book is about identity and difference at an epochal historical moment: the birth of Christianity. More specifically, it is about the way that one particular Christian writer—the author of the Gospel of Luke—conceived and construed early Christian identity in relation to the most important difference with which the earliest Christians had to wrestle: the rejection by non-Christian Jews of the early Christian conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. It was this difference, more than any other, that eventually led to two different ways of relating to the God of Israel. The difference between these two ways turned out to be very great, for it would shape the development of Judaism as much as Christianity. This book is not the full story of that development but a focused study in its first chapter. In what follows I attempt to understand and account for the perspective of one important author whose portrayal of early Jewish and Christian identities would come to exercise a powerful effect on early Christian self-understanding. If the central claim of this book is true, the author of the third gospel hoped to affect not only the early Christian self-conception but also early Christian conceptions of non-Christian Jews. He may even have hoped for a hearing among non-Christian Jews. Depending on how one discerns the history of the church and of Jewish/Christian relations, it may be that he was partly successful. Yet, in most cases, both among his self-proclaimed friends and his enemies, his claims about the meaning

of Christian identity in the context of Jewish/Christian difference have been largely misunderstood. This book is an attempt to find a way through the misunderstanding.

1.1 The State of the Questions

1.1.1 The Parting of the Ways and the Construction of Jewish and Christian Identities

In recent decades a steady stream of inquiry into the so-called “parting of the ways” between Christianity and Judaism in antiquity has challenged an earlier generation’s assumption of a definitive rupture between Jewish and Christian communities near the turn of the first century C.E.¹ Recent trends in the study of late antiquity have exposed the diversity internal to both early Judaism² and early Christianity,³ the diversity of the modes of relating these entities to one another in

¹ See, for example, Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). For the view of an early, definitive break between church and synagogue by the early second century, see Adolf von Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, Vol. 1, ed. and trans. James Moffatt (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1908), 44-72.

² See E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63BCE-66CE* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1992).

³ Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, ed. Robert A. Kraft and Gerhard Krodel, trans. Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971).

antiquity,⁴ the porosity of the boundaries partitioning these entities when erected,⁵ and the befuddling problem of anachronism in naming the realities of Jewish/Christian antiquity.⁶ The questioning of an early and clear parting of “Judaism” and “Christianity” from one another has been accompanied by a recovery both of the Jewishness of Jesus and of the substantial overlap between what would only much later come to be known as distinctive entities.⁷ These trends have yielded a richer and more complex picture of the ancient landscape in which Jews, Christians, and Jewish

⁴ See the essays in Reidar Hvalvik and Oskar Skarsaune, eds, *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2007) and Adam Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, eds., *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007).

⁵ See Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

⁶ On the difficulty of terminological anachronism and its import for these questions, see Megan Hale Williams, “No More Clever Titles: Observations on Some Recent Studies of Jewish-Christian Relations in the Roman World” *JQR* 99 (Winter, 2009): 37-55, as well as Daniel Boyarin, “Rethinking Jewish Christianity: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category” *JQR* 99 (2009): 7-36.

⁷ For the Jewishness of Jesus, see most notably Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth: His Life, Times and Teaching*, trans. Herbert Danby (London: Macmillan 1925); Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian’s Reading of the Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981); E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985); more recently, Daniel Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

Christians lived and related to one another, so that presently the question of the character of the earliest relations between the first followers of Jesus and their contemporaries is substantially open.⁸

While many matters in the study of Jewish/Christian relations in antiquity have become less theoretically determined, one fairly consistent tendency among scholars is the characterization of the development of early Christian identity as a process by which the exclusion and denigration of Jews as religious “others” provided the conceptual antipode against which early Christians came to understand themselves in a coherent way. Daniel Boyarin articulates this model of understanding the differentiation of early Jesus followers from non-Christian Jews: “Christianity, in its constitution as a religion...needed religious difference, needed Judaism to be its other—the religion that

⁸ E.P. Sanders summarizes the dynamics of early Christianity at the time of Paul: “The mission to the Jews was relatively unsuccessful” (*Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983], 185). Rodney Stark, however, suggests that from a sociological perspective the rapid growth of Christianity likely resulted from the *success* of the early Christian mission to the Jews (*The Rise of Christianity* [San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1997], 49-71). On the varying attitudes toward Judaism within the church, see Raymond E. Brown, “Not Jewish/Gentile Christianity but Types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity,” *CBQ* 45 (1983): 74-79; cf. Johannes Munck, “Primitive Jewish Christianity and Later Jewish Christianity: Continuation or Rupture?” in *Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme: Colloque de Strasbourg, 23-25 avril 1964*. (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1965): 77-94.

is false.”⁹ For Boyarin, this dynamic does not obtain at every point in the Jesus movement; in its earliest phases, particularly the first century C.E., “Christianity” and “Judaism” were not yet construed as distinct entities.¹⁰ When a conceptual distinction does appear, Boyarin urges, it comes into the world through the imposition of heresiological control by “border police” who create and enforce the difference through a discourse of “orthodoxy” and “heresy.”¹¹

This discourse is an integral part of the development of Christianity as a “religion,” a phenomenon whereby previously integrated realities of human life, such as worship, eating, sex, and national origin, become disintegrated from one another. The

⁹ Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 11. Boyarin is here summarizing the historical study of Seth Schwartz and the concept of religion in Denis Guénoun, works upon which his own study builds. See Schwartz, *Imperialism in Jewish Society from 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Denis Guénoun *Hypothèses sur l'Europe: Un essai de philosophie* (Belfort: Circé, 2000). See also Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974); John Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (New York: OUP, 1983). On Jews as literary constructs in the process of Christian identity formation, see Miriam Taylor, *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity: A Critique of the Scholarly Consensus* (Boston: Brill, 1997).

¹⁰ This is true, for example, in Boyarin’s appraisal of the historical Jesus (*The Jewish Gospels*), of Paul (*A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994]), and even of the christology of the fourth gospel (“The Intertextual Birth of the Logos,” in *Border Lines*, 89-111).

¹¹ Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 1-33.

“religion” that emerges from this disintegration takes shape by means of a habitual discursive practice that issues in the development of a rational system of thought that functions to justifying the identity of its practitioners. This system becomes the organizing center of the new “religion.”¹² For Boyarin, this development of religion is first observable in the philosopher Justin Martyr, whose dispute with Trypho the Jew portrays Christianity as the true philosophy in contrast to the errors of Jews and other “heretics” who reject Justin’s christology. Through this systematic self-definition, Justin achieves “a secure religious identity, a self-definition for Christians” in contradistinction to others, particularly Jewish others.¹³ By construing the difference between the true faith and its alternatives in this way, Justin imparts to “Christian identity” a preoccupation with the proto-orthodox heresiological conception of the Christian “faith” as a set of true ideas objectified in extended rational philosophical debate—that is, a

¹² Ibid., 8-13

¹³ Ibid., 37-73. Importantly, Boyarin observes an “inconsistency” in Justin’s thought, expressed in the last line of the *Dialogue with Trypho*, in which Justin portrays a friendly relation to non-Christian Jews as people of goodwill. According to Boyarin, this admission by Justin shows that he “inscribes a site of overlap and ambiguity between the two ‘religions’ that the text is at pains to construct as different” (*Border Lines*, 43-44). Whether it is Justin’s coherency or Boyarin’s theory that remains fully intact is a question outside the scope of this study, but the *aporia*, wherever it lies, points us to the difficulty of finding a theoretical framework for the relations of identity that accounts fully for the dynamics of ancient texts.

tendency toward abstraction.¹⁴ This innovation in early Christianity gave birth to a “religion” centered on the dogmatic exclusion of others and was initially mirrored by a heresiological counter-reaction among rabbinic Jews. But Jewish heresiology was a temporary reaction to this Christian creation and was rejected by the shapers of the Babylonian Talmud, who, along with an identity grounded in heresiology, rejected also the Christian concept of “religion.” For the Talmudic sages and their heirs, “Judaism” was destined not to be an un-Christian religion but something else altogether.

Whether or not Justin’s philosophically inflected Christianity in fact involved such a disembedding of theology from the rest of an otherwise integrated life,¹⁵ Boyarin’s argument is an example of the tendency of scholars of late antiquity to understand theological polemics not simply as attempts to chart the boundaries of orthodoxy but as an enterprise occupied fundamentally with the identity of the polemicists and with their need to “construct” and “secure” their self-conceptions over against the incursions of outsiders. By locating the heresiological impulse in the anxiety-ridden experience of competition for identity amidst the evidently scarce resources for

¹⁴ It is worth remembering that the philosophical tradition, to which Justin lays claim, was not in many of its ancient exemplars a disembedded discourse but part of an integrated way of life. See Pierre Hadôt, *What is Ancient Philosophy?* trans. Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2004).

¹⁵ On the connection in Justin between life and discourse, see C. Kavin Rowe, *One True Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 143-174.

self-conception, Boyarin presents Justin's theology, and the historical development to which it gave rise, as a means of sociological self-assertion. God-talk, on this model, is a matter of securing one's place in the world, of justifying one's own existence, which, it turns out, happens at the expense of others.

This way of thinking about polemical theology has immense explanatory power, for it exposes, in ways important to modern historical consciousness, the limited and socially embedded nature of theological speech. However, it is precisely the ability of this approach to expose the social and political motives behind theological claims, particularly at moments where such claims involve the exertion of exclusionary power, that renders this analysis liable to employ a reductive logic. When a well-founded hermeneutic of suspicion gives way to a conviction about the *esse* of social and religious phenomena—in this case “religious” identity—the theoretical “givens” that guide historical inquiry may help scholars to find what they are looking for while distorting phenomena incongruous with the presuppositions of inquiry. Though Boyarin himself generally avoids this danger, his laudable historical circumspection—his care to distinguish the moments at which Christianity and Judaism do and do not participate in the polarizing discourses of “religion”—has not been universally practiced by scholars of late antiquity, especially scholars of Luke-Acts.

Such difficulties in the interaction of theory and interpretive practice are well known in modern biblical research, and the history of critical research and the perennial

recalibrations of its methods caution us against dismissing such theories summarily on the ground of their misuse.¹⁶ The present study does not take issue either with Boyarin's approach or his claims about the inner dynamics that led to divisions between Christian and Jewish forms of life in the second through the fifth centuries of the Common Era. Instead, it aims to discern what may be learned about the usefulness and limits of this model by testing its applicability to an early Christian author whose writing—which spans roughly a quarter of the New Testament—is clearly aimed at explicating the identity of Jesus and the community of his followers.

1.1.2 Luke's Relation to Jews and Judaism

Aside from what is included in the text of Luke-Acts, which is largely devoid of self-reference, the only direct indications of the background of the author and provenance of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles come from later, conflicting traditions, which do not speak directly to the author's relation to Judaism.¹⁷

¹⁶ Thus, Albert Schweitzer's trenchant critique of the inability of liberal Protestant historical Jesus scholarship to see past its own nose did not lead to the end of historical Jesus scholarship but to a refinement of its methods (*The Quest for the Historical Jesus*, trans. W. Montgomery [Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2005]).

¹⁷ Irenaeus first records the tradition that Luke was the companion of Paul (*Haer.* 3.1.1). The early Greek and Latin gospel prologues indicate that he was from Antioch, a tradition also known by Eusebius

Nevertheless, most critical readings of Luke-Acts tend to locate the author of the third gospel squarely within the realm of gentile Christianity—that is, a gentile author writing for a predominantly gentile audience. This consensus view is widely assumed in biblical scholarship, but its underpinnings are seldom scrutinized. For its support it may claim the Greek name Λουκᾶς from the Gospels title, present in the earliest strata of the manuscript tradition, the author’s command of the Greek language, stylistic similarities with Hellenistic authors, the use of the Greek form of Israel’s scriptures, the author’s imprecise geographical knowledge of the land of Palestine, and a manifest concern for the inclusion of gentiles in the early church.¹⁸ Less convincing, though sometimes cited in this regard, is the author’s treatment of the Law and of Jewish tradition, which in fact reveals a striking degree of fidelity to traditional forms of Jewish

(*Hist. eccl.* 3.4.6). See Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 2 vols., AB (New York: Doubleday, 1979), 1:45. However, comments superscripted and postscripted to a number of early manuscripts of Luke’s Gospel in the Peshitta locate Luke in Alexandria and identify him with one of the seventy apostles sent out in Lk 10:1. See *Tetraeuangelium Sanctum: Juxta Simplicem Syrorum Versionem*, eds. Philip Edward Pusey and George Henry Gwilliam (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901), ad loci. If any historical truth is contained in either of these traditions, a proximity to Jews and Jewish Christianity is probable, for both Antioch and Alexandria were centers of Jewish life.

¹⁸ See Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:35-53; H.J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts* (London: S.P.C.K. 1968).

piety.¹⁹ With regard to the gentile world, these data provide strong evidence that 1) the author was a Greek-speaking person educated in Hellenistic literary traditions, perhaps outside the land of Palestine, and 2) the author approved of admitting gentiles into the Christian church without requiring their full observance of the Jewish Torah, which was reconceived, in Pauline fashion, in the interpretive context of the church's *kerygma*. This is the extent of the "gentile" character of Luke's writing: Luke was an educated Greek-speaking Christian of the more-or-less Pauline variety. This conclusion, however, does not foreclose the possibility that he, like Paul, was Jewish.²⁰

Luke's connection to the Jewish world may be seen in the depth of his indebtedness to the language, content, and modes of historical narration of the scriptures of Israel, his fondness for traditional pictures of Jewish piety, his emphasis on

¹⁹ See especially Isaac W. Oliver, *Torah Practice after 70 CE.*, WUNT2 355 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 80-237; cf. Matthew Thiessen, "Luke 2:22, Leviticus 12, and Parturient Impurity," *NovT* 54 (2012): 16-29.

²⁰ As Martin Hengel and others have argued, Palestinian Jews were thoroughly Hellenized well before the time of Luke's writing. See Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1981). François Bovon's opinion that Luke "was most likely a Greek by birth but turned to Judaism later in life" is no more likely than the possibility that he was a Hellenistic Jew by birth before his acceptance of Christian faith. See François Bovon, *Luke: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, 3 vols., trans. Christine M. Thomas, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002–2013), 1:8).

the fidelity of Jesus and his followers to temple and Torah, the prominent place of Jerusalem in his story, his portrayal of gentile Christians as former Godfearers associated with Jewish synagogues, his symbolic narration of the early church as a restored Israel, his concern to answer Jewish objections raised to gentile inclusion in the church, and his extended engagement through his portrait of Paul with the mission to the Jews. Though these observations are enough to suggest Luke's proximity to the Jewish world, they are insufficient to provide certainty regarding the ethnic identity of the author.²¹ It may be, as Matthew Thiessen has recently suggested, that the evidence, taken together, justifies a working assumption that Luke was Jewish.²² As this is a debated issue, a full engagement in the argument over Luke's identity must be reserved for another day. For our purposes, it is enough to observe that Luke, whoever he was, was *Jew-ish*. He carried a set of concerns, convictions, knowledge, and habits that are recognizable within the gamut of Second Temple Jewish life as that life was negotiated within the world of Hellenistic culture.

²¹ From a historical perspective, it is nearly impossible to distinguish, without direct attestation, a gentile Christian convert who had previously sustained a close attachment to the synagogue as a "Godfearer" from a Hellenistic Jewish convert. It is likewise impossible to distinguish whether Luke was a convert at all. Since his writing should be dated at least to the second or third generation since the beginning of the Christian mission, he may have been a child of converts.

²² As suggested in his unpublished paper, "Indices of Ethnicity in Modern Constructions of 'Luke,'" presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Nov 22, 2015.

The audience and situation for which Luke wrote is a more important question for the present study, for the assessment of the purpose of Luke's writings is largely determined by the historical context in which those writings are thought to have circulated. There are two dominant theories with regard to Luke's situation. The first is the view that Luke wrote for a mixed audience of Jewish and gentile Christians. This view was pioneered by F. C. Baur in his classic study of the portrayal of Peter and Paul in Acts, in which he argued that Luke was attempting to create a narrative of reconciliation, the purpose of which was to bring together two great branches in early Christianity—the gentile Christian constituency associated with Paul and the Torah-observant Jewish Christian constituency associated with James and Peter.²³ Much has changed in scholarship on early Judaism, early Christianity, and Paul since the time of Baur, but the legacy of interpreting Acts as a document marking the early church's movement away from Jewish particularity while maintaining a reverent connection to its Jewish past has endured. This legacy of interpreting Acts as a story of conciliation is present in the work of Johannes Munck, who, in sharp distinction to Baur, ascribes a strong historical reliability to Luke's writing and dates it to the mid first century in Palestine, close in time and place to the events it narrates. For Munck, Acts describes the original unity between Paul and the Jerusalem apostles, who shared in a proto-orthodox

²³ Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life, Works, His Epistles and Teaching*, 2nd ed., 2 vols., rev., ed., and trans. Eduard Zeller and A. Menzies (London: Williams and Norgate, 1876).

Jewish Christianity that welcomed gentiles.²⁴ Philip Esler likewise understands Luke to be striving for rapprochement between Jewish and gentile Christian communities.

Envisioning multiple strains of Jewish Christianity in Jerusalem, Esler identifies Luke's position with that of the Hellenists who, like Paul, wanted to include gentiles in a faith that was free from the constraints of Jewish particularity. For Esler, this "liberal" wing of Jewish Christianity attracted a sizeable portion of Jews along with gentiles to the early church, and it is especially to assure this type of Jewish Christian community of the security of its post-synagogue existence that Luke writes a narrative of origins that unites these Jewish Christians with fellow gentile Christians in a shared identity in the proto-catholic church.²⁵

Esler's conviction that Luke's church included a substantial number of Jews (who, for Esler, had broken off contact with the synagogue) echoes the important work of Jacob Jervell, who argues for Luke's portrayal of a positive Jewish response to the apostolic message in the church's early days. For Jervell, the mission to the gentiles is predicated on the original *success* of the mission to the Jews, as demonstrated especially

²⁴ See Johannes Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles*, rev. William F. Albright and C. S. Mann, AB 31 (New York: Doubleday, 1967), xxx-xxxii. Baur also envisioned an original unity, but he believed this had deteriorated by the time of Luke's writing.

²⁵ Philip Francis Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lukan Theology*, SNTSMS 57 (Cambridge: University Press, 1987), 163, 222.

in the early chapters of Acts. The rejection of the gospel by Diaspora Jews in the second half of Acts reflects, for Jervell, the historical reality that the mission to the Jews eventually failed. By the time of Luke's writing that mission had runs its course, and hopes for Jewish conversion had altogether ceased, but the effects of the "mighty minority" of Jews who did join the church endured.²⁶ Building on Jervell's insights into the historical importance of Jewish Christianity in Luke's narrative, Robert Brawley has argued that, in the gospel as well as in the early *and later* chapters of Acts, Luke's posture toward Jews is conciliatory rather than denunciatory and that Luke hoped, through showing the indebtedness of gentile-inclusive Christianity to Judaism, to effect the conversion of non-Christian Jews.²⁷ Each of these studies understands the Jewish or Jewish Christian elements in Luke's writing to reflect some form of historical reality in early Christianity and, in the cases of Munck and Brawley, an earnest hope to see the Jewish Christian constituency increase.

But the data can be interpreted differently. For Franz Overbeck, the apologetic tendency of Luke's writing was not, as for Baur, aimed at reconciling real factions in the church but at giving a tendentious and largely ahistorical account of the origins of

²⁶ See Jacob Jervell, *Luke and the People of God: A New Look at Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972), 41-74; idem, "The Mighty Minority," *ST* 34 (1980): 13-38.

²⁷ See Robert L. Brawley, *Luke-Acts and the Jews: Conflict, Apology, and Conciliation*, SBLMS 33 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987).

gentile Christianity. This proto-catholic Christianity had watered down the religion of Paul through fusion with Jewish influences. For Overbeck, Luke's story comes from a situation in which the synthesis that Baur saw Luke attempting to forge was already a historical fact.²⁸ Overbeck's view of the early demise of Jewish Christianity was taken up in Adolf von Harnack's widely influential two volume work, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, in which the essence of true, Pauline Christianity gained historical dominance through the gentile mission early in the life of the church. Acts remains, for Harnack, a mostly reliable historical source for the earliest stage of Christianity, and Luke's positive portrayals of Judaism show a historian's fidelity to the very early period. Luke was a gentile and retained, as did his companion Paul, a love for the Old Testament and a degree of nostalgia for the Jewish people, which are reflected in the account of Christian origins that he wrote for the gentiles who, by his time, dominated the churches.²⁹ The historical accounts of Overbeck and Harnack thus

²⁸ See W.M.L. De Wette, *Kurze Erklärung der Apostelgeschichte, Vierte Auflage, bearbeitet und stark erweitert von Lic. th. Franz Overbeck*, ed. Franz Overbeck (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1870); cf. A. C. McGiffert, "The Historical Criticism of Acts in Germany," in F.J. Foakes Jackson, Kirsopp Lake, eds, *The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I, The Acts of the Apostles*, Vol 2 (London: MacMillan and Co, 1922), 381-82.

²⁹ Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, 44-72. On Harnack's contribution to Lukan scholarship, see Joseph B. Tyson, *Luke, Judaism, and the Scholars: Critical Approaches to Luke-Acts* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 30-42. Lloyd Gaston presents Harnack's historical reading as a virtual consensus position ("Anti-Judaism and the Passion Narrative in Luke and Acts," in Peter

provide the precedent for reading the Jewish elements in Luke's narrative as related to a *distant* past, which Luke the gentile wishes to claim for gentile Christianity, the faith of which he attempts to buttress.

Insights from these two approaches are brought together in the important work of Jack Sanders, whose monograph *The Jews in Luke-Acts* is presently the most comprehensive treatment of Luke's orientation toward Jews and Judaism.³⁰ As a series of systematic investigations coupled with an abbreviated commentary on Luke's two volumes, Sanders' work provides a meticulous reading of Luke's attitude toward Jews. I believe it is a meticulous *misreading*, but Sanders' attempt at an exhaustive treatment of the subject matter, together with his attempt to treat the text *in toto* and his framing of the question in terms of the contemporary social problem of anti-Semitism, makes his work worthy of extended review.

Richardson and David Granskou, eds, *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity: Volume 1, Paul and the Gospels*, ESCJ 2 [Waterloo, CA: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986], 139), dismissing the Tübingen position. John Gager's *hommage* to Gaston's article reverts from Harnack's position to Baur's, yet without reference to Baur's much-discussed position or to Sanders' suggested return to it two decades earlier (John C. Gager, "Where does Luke's Anti-Judaism come from?" ASE 24/1 [2007]: 31-35).

³⁰ Jack. T. Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

For Sanders, Overbeck and others are correct in the judgment that Luke-Acts is a tendentious work aimed at legitimizing the connection between Luke's community and Israel's sacred past. Positive images of the relation of Jesus and the early church to Jewish traditions demonstrate historical continuity with biblical Israel rather than an ongoing connection with Jewish life, either within the Christian community or in dialogue with outsiders. Luke thus lays claim to the Jewish roots of the Christian faith, but his attitude toward contemporary Jews is altogether hostile. This hostility extends not only to non-Christian Jews but to Jewish Christians, whom Luke attacks together with their non-Christian kinfolk in "shotgun blasts" of anti-Jewish hatred.³¹ Following Baur, Sanders affirms that Luke wrote in response to tension between gentile and Jewish strains of early Christianity. But Sanders rejects Baur's proposal of Acts as a narrative of conciliation. Rather, Luke writes to announce that God has forsaken both non-Christian Judaism and Jewish Christianity in favor of the new, exclusively gentile faith. For Sanders, Luke's extreme anti-Judaism is an ancient harbinger of modern Christian instantiations of cultural xenophobia and so emboldens a theological attitude "against which we must all and eternally be on guard."³²

Sanders' interpretation of Luke's historical situation and theological attitude is not easily accomplished. The problem, as Sanders recognizes, is that Luke presents

³¹ Sanders, *Jews in Luke-Acts*, 315.

³² *Ibid.*, 316.

different images of the Jewish people—some positive, and some negative.³³ In terms of history, Sanders reconciles these images by identifying the positive scenes with Luke's memory of the church's idyllic past, while he associates the harsher, negative images of Jews with conflicts in Luke's own context, in which a gentile identity crisis prompted Luke's full-scale rejection of everything Jewish.³⁴ This historical reconstruction is coordinated to Sanders' assessment of Luke's literary presentation of the Jewish people. Because Luke's presentation of Jews "is not done in vividly contrasting colours but in subtle shades," the narrative does not provide a simple answer to what Luke "thinks" of the Jewish people; this is the "sticky wicket" of interpreting Luke's view of the Jews.³⁵ Sanders' solution to this difficulty is achieved by deconstructing Luke's work into narrative and speech material and discovering in these formal sub-divisions the key to Luke's subtle compositional logic. The narrative material, he asserts, contains an

³³ Ibid., 37-39.

³⁴ Sanders does not substantially defend this proposal, and his arguments against Robert Maddox's proposal of a setting of Jewish opposition drive an unnecessary historical wedge between the issue of gentile inclusion, which Sanders takes as central to the crisis, and arguments with non-Christian Jews and Jewish Christians over *other* features of early Christian life and preaching. Nevertheless, his observation of the role of gentile inclusion in assessing Luke's situation is astute (*Jews in Luke-Acts*, 315-317; see Robert Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982], 183-5).

³⁵ Sanders, *Jews in Luke-Acts*, 37-8.

ambiguous set of positive and negative images of the Jews, while the sayings material (at least that ascribed to Jesus, Peter, Stephen, and Paul) discloses Luke's real attitude:

That attitude is that the Jews are and always have been willfully ignorant of the purposes and plans of God expressed in their familiar scriptures, that they always have rejected and will reject God's offer of salvation, that they executed Jesus and persecute and hinder those who try to advance the gospel, and that they get one chance at salvation, which they will of course reject, bringing God's wrath down on them, and quite deservedly so. There is not a single saying, story or speech put into the mouths of the four leading speakers in Luke-Acts that contradicts this position, and it is repeated over and over in every way possible *ad nauseam*.³⁶

This univocal anti-Judaism, which according to Sanders is expressed unambiguously in the saying material of Luke-Acts, finds expression only obliquely and gradually in the narrative, in which there is a gradual disclosure of Luke's true hostility so that by the end of Acts, "existence comes to conform with essence" and the reader learns who the

³⁶ Ibid., 63.

Jews really were all along.³⁷ The hopes that Luke's characters articulate for Israel's glory (Lk 2:32), redemption (Lk 24:21), restoration to God's kingdom (Acts 1:6), and salvation (Acts 13:23, 28:20) are, Luke's readers are supposed to conclude, finally misplaced.

Sanders achieves a workable answer to the question of Luke's "view of the Jews" only through his consistent distortion and misrepresentation of the textual data. The passages just alluded to each express the hopes of Luke's characters who, through their consistency, appear to speak for the evangelist himself. Though the nature of the fulfillment of this posture of hope is a difficult question in Luke's narrative, the articulation of these hopes on the lips of Luke's characters undermines Sanders' claim that the sayings material in Luke-Acts consistently negates any hope for the salvation of Jews. In truth, the speech material of Luke-Acts, like the narrative material, presents a consistently complex set of images. Jon Weatherly's careful demonstration that this thoroughgoing complexity cuts across the generic distinction that Sanders claims is the key to his solution is a fatal blow to Sanders' analysis, though not necessarily to his position.³⁸

³⁷ Ibid., 81. This reading of a progressive hostility, not only in Acts but in Luke's gospel as well, is part of Amy-Jill Levine's account of Luke's anti-Judaism. See "Luke and the Jewish Religion," *Interpretation* 68 (4) (2014): 393.

³⁸ Jon A. Weatherly, "The Jews in Luke-Acts," *TynBul* 40 (1) (May 1989):107-117. Amy-Jill Levine is convinced of Luke's anti-Judaism on the grounds of the incompatibility between Luke's theological vision

In the wake of Sanders' unpersuasive argument, we are left with the problem he identifies: "The reason that there are two theories about Luke on the Jews is that Luke-Acts makes both kinds of statements, sometimes back to back."³⁹ More than anyone else, Joseph B. Tyson has devoted himself to describing the interpretive difficulties this complexity in Luke's narrative presents to scholars.⁴⁰ In distinction from Sanders, Tyson regards these various images of Judaism in Luke's pastiche as evidence of a more ambivalent posture toward Jews. Judiciously weighing the evidence for Luke's view of Judaism, Tyson finds that the end of Acts tips the scales in the direction of anti-Judaism, but he generally resists reducing Luke's complex, ambiguous narrative to one of these images.⁴¹ In seeking to preserve the complexity of Luke's vision, Tyson provides an

and the shape of what she identifies as (non-messianic) Judaism ("Luke and the Jewish Religion"). On Levine's theological critique of Luke, see the final chapter.

³⁹ Sanders, *Jews in Luke-Acts*, 50.

⁴⁰ See Joseph B. Tyson, ed., *Luke-Acts and the Jews: Eight Critical Perspectives* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988); *Images of Judaism in Luke-Acts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992); *Luke, Judaism, and the Scholars: Critical Approaches to Luke-Acts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999); *Marcion and Luke-Acts: A Defining Struggle* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006).

⁴¹ On ambiguity in Luke's writing, see Tyson, *Luke, Judaism, and the Scholars*, 137-140. Lloyd Gaston likewise observes that "Luke's is in many ways the most complex of the gospels... No statement about his work can stand without qualification" ("Anti-Judaism and the Passion Narrative," 127). For Tyson's

extended confirmation of the paradoxical statement of Lloyd Gaston, that “Luke-Acts is one of the most pro-Jewish and one of the most anti-Jewish writings in the New Testament.”⁴²

This brief survey of treatments of Luke’s portrayal of Jews brings to light two important facts that are significant for the present study. The first is that the history behind Luke-Acts bears importantly on assessments of the function of the text as a narrative. Readers who want to understand Luke’s mind on the Jews must read the text with ears tuned to the character of the text as a theological narrative and to its significance within the history of the social movement it chronicles. The second lesson is like the first: Luke’s narrative, like the real world in which it arose and which it purports to explain, is complex and resists conceptual reduction. The “portrait of the Jews” in Luke-Acts cannot be described adequately in the terms that modern biblical scholarship finds easiest to work with. The impulse to categorize elements of the text as

deconstruction of the ambiguity in Luke’s depiction of shared responsibility for Jesus’ death, see *The Death of Jesus in Luke-Acts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1986), 139. For a summary of Brawley’s critique of Tyson’s conclusions, see “The God of Promises and the Jews in Luke-Acts,” in *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays in Honor of Joseph B. Tyson*, ed. Richard P. Thompson and Thomas E. Phillips (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998), 279.

⁴² Lloyd Gaston, “Anti-Judaism in the Passion Narrative in Luke and Acts,” 153.

“pro-Jewish” or “anti-Jewish” results, as the studies of Gaston and Tyson show, in an inability to say much about the character of Luke’s theological posture toward Judaism beyond the observation that it contains a great deal of ambiguity—an admission of a sort of hung jury in the court of critical analysis. However, far from indicating that scholars have seen to the bottom of Luke’s thought, only to find it disappointingly vague, such a conclusion suggests that the analysis itself needs refinement. In this case, it is not so much the exegetical methods that need refining (though this is always part of our task). Rather, and more basically, it is the philosophical assumptions that undergird exegetical analysis that require greater attention.

1.1.3 “Identity Construction” and its Relevance for Luke-Acts

Within the humanities and social sciences, the concept of “identity” has seen a vast and productive deployment in recent decades. In common usage, the term denotes some form of particular existence, whether of an individual or group, and frequently functions to designate the internal coherence of that existence in its particularity, often in distinction from other particular options for existence, especially as these alternate forms of existence are embodied in the particular existences of individuals and groups that are,

to some extent, “other.”⁴³ Like the self, identity is a nebulous concept.⁴⁴ This is due, in part, to the tension between the dynamic nature of identity—the fact that identity is “constituted in a dialectic process that interacts with the other”—and the human impulse to organize in a more or less static fashion a conception of the self and the self’s community.⁴⁵ The fashioning of human self-conceptions, which obtains in the nexus of living in relation to others and reflecting upon such relations, is a constructive, interpretive, habitual action whereby an image of the self is formed, an image that has a particular character within the perceived world that provides a defining context to the identity formed. Because identity is bound up with representation, reflection upon the portrayal of identities can provide a useful critical lens for analyzing the dynamics of representation within narrative and, correlatively, within the social contexts in and for which stories are told.

⁴³ For “identity” as a theoretical concept in modern psychology and sociology, see among many studies Erik Erickson, *Childhood and Society*, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton & Company, 1963) and Warren Kidd, *Culture and Identity* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2001).

⁴⁴ For Judith M. Lieu, identity “involves ideas of boundedness, of sameness and difference, of continuity, perhaps of a degree of homogeneity, and of recognition by self and by others,” *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2004), 12.

⁴⁵ See Monika Fludernik, “Identity/Alterity,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. David Herman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 261.

The options for conceiving the relation of identity and alterity are varied. At one end of the spectrum is the conviction that “acts of identity formation are themselves acts of violence” so that any attempt to portray a coherent self or community must come at the cost of harm enacted physically, socially, or symbolically against another.⁴⁶ According to this position, the formation of identity is inherently an act of exclusionary boundary-making that, in some way, expels others whose presence poses a threat, either real or imagined, to a stable identity. This model derives support from Freud’s theory of psychological development through successive struggles and finds expression in philosophical writings of Nietzsche and the sociological reflections of Foucault.⁴⁷ It commands substantial explanatory power with regard, for example, to social conflict, violence, and oppression, in which the operations of self-exertion and other-denigration are manifest. Yet despite the suitability of this theoretical position for accounting for the darkest dynamics of human existence, it does not follow that the violent opposition

⁴⁶ Regina M. Schwartz, *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 5.

⁴⁷ Erikson in particular developed Freud’s psychoanalytical work into one of the first sociological theories of identity (*Childhood and Society*, 277-424). Cf. Sigmund Freud, *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* in *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans and ed. James Strachey, Vol 11 (London: Hogarth Press, 1957); Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Alexander Tille (New York: MacMillan, 1886); Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in an Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Vintage Books, 1973).

between identity and alterity accurately describes all modes of human life—that everything about who we think we are depends, in the end, on violence.

Miroslav Volf has mounted an extended argument that exclusionary violence is not a necessary part of the conceptualization of bounded identities. Rather, humans engage in the construction of identity through various modes of “differentiation” that may, but need not always, imply violent opposition. As one example Volf explores the simultaneous distinction and interrelation of biological sex, a site where difference, though often associated with various forms of individual and social violence, nevertheless also provides conditions suitable for an alternative to violence, namely love.⁴⁸ For Volf, the act of differentiation, which is constitutive of identity formation, may involve not only the establishing of *distinction from* the other but also and importantly *connection to* the other.⁴⁹ If this mode of relating to the other is a possibility in any sphere of life (and sex is not the only sphere in which Volf shows that a positive relation to others may obtain), that possibility undermines the theoretical necessity of grounding identity in the exercise of exclusionary violence and suggests instead the need for a wider framework for conceiving the relation of identity-conscious selves to one another. Volf maintains that the recognition of the other is essential to the

⁴⁸ Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 167-189.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 57-68.

perception of the self, but the other does not always relate to the self as its polar opposite; often the other functions as a reference point within, and as a means of access to, a common life. Importantly, this model of the relation between identity construction and “others” retains the possibility of explicating dynamics of violence and yet provides a more capacious framework for reckoning with other modes of relating identity, alterity, and the processes that distinguish them.⁵⁰

The relevance of attending to the question of identity construction is evident in Boyarin’s claim, discussed above, that the Christian religion developed, and only could develop, through the denigration of Jewish difference. This model has been part of German critical scholarship on Acts since the work of Overbeck, but it has seen its most theoretically sophisticated deployment in post-Shoah reflections, which have been concerned to identify and denounce anti-Semitism in early Christianity. Shelly Matthews, for example, has argued that Luke’s portrayal of Stephen’s martyrdom is primarily aimed at constructing the image of the violent Jew, against which Stephen’s exemplary martyrdom and speech outlining the history of Jewish violence sets early

⁵⁰ This prospect that others may be positive points of reference for the self and its community is explored with respect to ancient social relations by Erich S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

Christian identity in sharp relief.⁵¹ John Gager regards as definitive Gaston's article on anti-Judaism in the Lukan passion narrative, which he alleges has proved that, in "the formative moment in the emergence of Christian identity in Luke-Acts...the key element, the indisputable center is anti-Judaism."⁵² For Gaston, as for Gager, self-definition through denigration of Jews is part of the architecture of Luke's narrative, which encourages its readers to form their identities through alliance with the heroes of the narrative in opposition to the villains:

When a community-forming story is told, the hearers naturally identify with those characters who help them form their own self-understanding. The identification of friends and enemies of those characters is equally helpful. The enemies are those who define us negatively, what we should not be like, and also help us to perceive contemporary threats to our identity. The sympathetic

⁵¹ Shelly Matthews, *Perfect Martyr: The Stoning of Stephen and the Construction of Christian Identity* (Oxford: OUP, 2010). For a promising but all-too-brief analysis of Stephen's speech within the dynamics of Jewish prophetic discourse see David Ravens, *Luke and the Restoration of Israel*, JSNTSup 119 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 50-71.

⁵² Gager, "Where Does Luke's Anti-Judaism Come From?" 32-33.

friends not only lend legitimacy to our movement but are those to whom we can appeal to join it.⁵³

This recognition of the power of community forming stories is salutary, and the short history of Lukan scholarship surveyed above demonstrates the nearly universal conviction that Luke intends his narrative to have a communal effect. It is unclear, however, that the mode of identity formation in Luke's narrative, or any narrative, must be fundamentally oppositional with respect to enemies and friends, as Gaston and Gager envision. Peter Berger has described the narration of religious identity as the communal construction of a "sacred canopy," an ordering narrative, that serves to guide life and reflection for those within its ambit.⁵⁴ On Berger's theory of the social function of narrative, identity takes shape not primarily through identification with key characters but by the relations that obtain between those for whom the narrative holds power and the total imaginary world the narrative constructs. This broader view of narrative-constituted social identity has been put to productive use by Philip Esler to describe the situation that appears to underlie Luke's socio-economic vision. Precisely

⁵³ Gaston, "Anti-Judaism," 128.

⁵⁴ Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990); cf. P.L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967).

because of the capaciousness of Berger's model, Esler is able to comprehend Luke-Acts as a document intended to shape an audience that is substantially more complex than that envisioned by Gaston, Gager, and Sanders, an audience of gentile *and Jewish* Christians in the midst of a complex social situation.⁵⁵ Within this situation, Luke's narrative presses at *various* points to pressure various types of reader toward Luke's communal ideals.

Esler's deployment of Berger's methodologically underdetermined model stands at a distance from the approach taken by his student, Aaron Kuecker, in a recent study of identity and alterity in Luke-Acts.⁵⁶ Kuecker attempts to apply the categories of contemporary Social Identity Theory (SIT) to Luke's portrayal of identity and boundary making in Luke-Acts. Informed by SIT, Kuecker is able to identify what is sociologically "typical" in Luke-Acts (in-group love and out-group hostility), and this identification serves to set in greater relief what is "atypical," innovative, and theologically significant (out-group love, empowered by the Spirit).⁵⁷ While there may be much in SIT to make it

⁵⁵ Esler, *Community and Gospel*, 16-23, 30-33.

⁵⁶ Aaron J. Kuecker, *The Spirit and the 'Other': Social Identity, Ethnicity, and Intergroup Reconciliation in Luke-Acts*, LNTS 444 (New York: T&T Clark, 2011).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 24-49. For an overview of SIT, see Rupert Brown, "Social Identity Theory: Past Achievements, Current Problems and Future Challenges," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 30 (2000): 745-778.

useful in the study of ancient religion, the major weakness in Kuecker's approach lies in his preoccupation with demonstrating the *descriptive* power of the theory, so that, in the end, his monograph sheds little *interpretive* light on Luke-Acts; most of his book is a retelling of the story of Luke-Acts in the descriptive grammar of SIT. His argument that Luke commends a trans-ethnic, "allocentric" Christian identity (an identity that includes love for the "other" as a constitutive element) is correct as far as it goes, but Kuecker struggles to account for the *Jewishness* of Luke's gentile-inclusive vision. Through his emphasis upon Luke's transcendence of ethnic particularity, Kuecker sees a firm contrast between the "typical" dynamics of ethnic identity construction in SIT and Luke's alternative, which is thoroughly atypical.⁵⁸ As recent discussions of Luke's ethnicity have suggested, however, Luke (and perhaps strains of the Christian movement with which he was engaged) may have been far more Jewish than Kuecker imagines. In any case, Kuecker's attempts to erase ethnic particularity from Luke's vision are unpersuasive.

⁵⁸ *Pace* Kuecker, Mary's song and Anna's prophecy do not represent "ethnocentric" visions of "privileged identity" that lack the purifying influence of the Holy Spirit (*The Spirit and the Other*, 72, 60, n.47). Mary is said to be in the presence of the Lord in 1:28 and under the influence of the Spirit in 1:35, and she is consistently presented as a pious exemplar, as is Anna, who prays and fasts continually in the temple and exults in praise to God at the arrival of Jesus (Lk 2:36-38). There is no indication that Luke views these characters or their hopes as ethnocentric foils to his more universalistic vision.

1.1.4 Concluding Observations

The survey above reveals a lack of consensus about where to situate Luke's writings in terms of social history and about how to characterize Luke's purpose in writing. While there is agreement that Luke is engaged in the portrayal of identities—both "Christian" and, in some sense, "Jewish" identities—scholars disagree about how this process of constructing identities should be conceived, both theoretically and with regard to Luke's writing in particular. In the face of this confusion, the present study does not propose to read Luke-Acts in light of a particular theory of social identity formation. Rather, it employs the less determined modes of literary and historical analysis to scrutinize Luke's presentation of Jewish and Christian identities and, especially, their relation to one another and, in so doing, reflects at length on the function of such portrayals in the community of the evangelist.

1.2 Approach, Assumptions, and Limitations

1.2.1 Approach

The questions of this study are both theological and historical: how has Luke portrayed Jewish and Christian identities with respect to one another, and what might this double portrayal tell us about the intended function and possible historical context of Luke-Acts? The answers to these questions, which are inherently related, depend upon discerning the socio-rhetorical character of the narrative. Evaluating the socio-

rhetorical character of Luke's presentation of identity and alterity does not depend, in this study, on a novel methodology but on the sustained, judicious application of relatively stable methods of New Testament studies to the questions at hand.⁵⁹ The framework for the methods used depends on a relatively basic insight regarding the rhetorical nature of narrative. Outlining the approach of rhetorical criticism in modern literature, James Phelan asserts, "The first and most overarching principle" of a rhetorical theory of narrative is that "narrative is a rhetorical action in which somebody tries to accomplish some purpose(s) by telling somebody else that something happened."⁶⁰ That this principle captures the basic character of Luke-Acts is clear from the preface to Theophilus in Lk 1:1-4.⁶¹ This uncontroversial claim—that there is a distinction of between the author's purpose and the narrative the author writes—carries

⁵⁹ In seeking to discern the "socio-rhetorical" character of Luke-Acts, my approach is independent of that advocated by Vernon K Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996). For an overview and critique of Robbins' approach to the interrelation of social and textual analysis within his own distinctive symbolic grammar, see R. Alan Culpepper, "Mapping the Textures of New Testament Criticism: A Response to Socio-Rhetorical Criticism" *JSNT* 70 (1998): 71-77, and Margaret E. Dean, "Textured Criticism" *JSNT* 70 (1998): 79-91.

⁶⁰ James Phelan, "Rhetoric/Ethics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, 209.

⁶¹ On the function and background of Luke's preface, see Loveday Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Conventions and Social Context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1*, *SNTS* 78 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

with it a significant implication for any analysis that would attempt to say something meaningful about the author: one must first pay close attention to the “something” that “happened” in the story before attempting to understand what the author hoped the narrative would accomplish. Accordingly, the present study approaches the Gospel of Luke firstly as a literary creation and seeks to provide a reading of the text as a whole with respect to the question of Christian and Jewish identities. Secondly, I reflect on how Luke’s portrayals of Jewish and Christian identities may be supposed to have functioned historically among Luke’s first readers. In this way, the historical questions of this study are methodologically subordinate to a theologically sensitive literary analysis.

Obviously, the Gospel of Luke is not a discourse on identity, nor is it, like the Acts of the Apostles, the story of the church. It is, instead, the story of Jesus. Yet it is clear that this gospel was written in *anticipation* of the story of the church and that traces of the author’s purpose in telling the story may be visible in the way that story is told. In this model of historically sensitive reading, the gospel is like a window that looks out from a living room onto a garden. The purpose of the window is to provide a view of something else, namely the garden. But the shape and location of the window also discloses something about the purpose of the room in which it is situated. And, depending on the light and perspective of the viewer, in the glass there may also be reflected something of the contents of the room. The analogy points to the need for us to

regard both the story Luke tells and the story of the storyteller, for it is as these are held together that we may hope to discern the totality of the situation in which Luke decided to write what he wrote.⁶²

The holistic reading of Luke's narrative is framed in the present work by a study of Luke's extended introduction to the gospel (Chapter 2) and a close reading of its final scenes (Chapter 6). Between these chapters, the life of Jesus is examined for what it may tell us about the identities of those with whom he interacted. The question of Luke's portrayal of non-Christian Jewish others is explored by examining Luke's portrayal of Jesus' conflicts with opponents, who through opposition to Jesus anticipate the Jewish rejection of the church's gospel (Chapter 3). This chapter is followed by an examination of Jesus' relation to and conflicts with disciples, who anticipate the community of the early church (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 explores how these two groups—friends and enemies, in Gaston's terminology—function within the so-called "travel narrative" that bridges the gap between Jesus' Galilean ministry and his passion in Jerusalem.

Luke is a preserver as well as a modifier of the gospel tradition that predated him. The present study is thus concerned to account for the whole of Luke's gospel, and not only with what may be called distinctively Lukan. Nevertheless, distinctively Lukan

⁶² As Nils Dahl suggests, "It is reasonable to assume that the purpose of Luke-Acts is reflected in the narrative rather than in some polemical, parenetic, or other tendency to be abstracted from it" ("The Purpose of Luke-Acts," in *Jesus and the Memory of the Early Church* [Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976], 88).

elements give an impression about Luke's unique contributions to the gospel tradition, and these contributions are especially important for the project of seeking to understand the author historically. Accordingly, each of the chapters gives special attention to what is distinctively Lukan in Luke's story. As Luke's distinctive contributions are almost always a development of some feature of the gospel tradition prior to him, the redaction-critical approach here employed avoids, it may be hoped, the danger of isolating and emphasizing only those points that evidence a discontinuity between Luke's redaction and the sources he modifies.

1.2.2 The Sources of Luke's Gospel

I proceed in what follows from the widely accepted critical conviction that the author Luke was dependent in his writing upon the Gospel of Mark. While the priority of Mark is generally accepted, the origins of the non-Markan material in Luke are disputed. Non-Markan material shared with the Gospel of Matthew ("double tradition") may come from Luke's use of Q, a lost source on which Matthew was also dependent.⁶³ Alternatively, Luke may have drawn this material directly from Matthew's

⁶³ Argued classically in English by B.S. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (New York: MacMillan, 1925), 151-198.

gospel, making the scholarly postulation of Q unnecessary.⁶⁴ Two notable features of the synoptic tradition present themselves to the critic who seeks to evaluate these opposing theories. The first is that the reasons adduced for postulating Luke's independence from Matthew in the double and triple traditions are weighty, such that a lost common source is a reasonable postulate in many instances.⁶⁵ The second is that the presence of a great many agreements between Luke and Matthew against Mark in the triple tradition, which cannot all be easily explained as independent parallel redactions of Mark or corruptions in the manuscript tradition, demonstrates the difficulty of imagining the version of Q that Luke used to have been independent of Markan tradition.⁶⁶ For adherents of the Farrer theory, the postulation of Mark-Q overlaps by two-source theorists appears to be special pleading and results in imagining a version of Q

⁶⁴ As argued most extensively by Mark Goodacre, *The Case Against Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002); idem, *The Synoptic Problem: A Way Through the Maze* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001): 122-161.

⁶⁵ Streeter's conclusions were tentative: "The Q hypothesis, however, can be pressed too far...All attempts at a reconstruction of Q must be tentative" (*The Four Gospels*, 153). This caution has often been disregarded in Q scholarship.

⁶⁶ See, for example, the parallel redaction of Mk 1:2 in Lk 7:27 and Mt 11:10; cf. Mark Goodacre, "The Evangelist's Use of the Old Testament and the Synoptic Problem," in *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem: Oxford Conference, April 2008: Essays in Honor of Christopher M. Tuckett* (Leuven: Peeters, 2011): 284-289.

containing not only the substance of the double tradition but also a substantial amount of material common with Mark. But the greater the overlap between Mark and Q, the more Q begins to look more and more like Matthew.⁶⁷ On the other hand, if a written non-Markan source common to both Matthew and Luke existed—and this is, a priori, a reasonable historical speculation (cf. Lk 1:1, πολλοί)—then cross-pollination between Mark and that source is not a matter of special pleading but, rather, a historical likelihood given the premise of the theory. Indeed, such a blending of sources is precisely what we find in the synoptic gospels, the Gospel of John, the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Infancy Gospel of James*, and the *Gospel of Peter*. Even if Luke has used Matthew’s gospel as well, this possibility need not preclude his use of Matthew’s non-Markan sources, oral or written. It is conceivable then that the truth lies somewhere between the Farrer and two-source theories.

This book is not the place to resolve the protracted debate over the Synoptic Problem. What matters for this study is how source-critical assumptions affect the present analysis of Luke’s gospel. As it turns out, it is Luke’s use of *Mark* that is most significant in what follows. Since Markan priority is well-established, my interpretation of Luke’s gospel engages in extensive redactional analysis of Luke’s use of Mark. For passage in which Luke’s source are debatable, I have endeavored to be circumspect with

⁶⁷ As observed by E.P. Sanders and Margaret Davies, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels* (London: SCM Press, 1980), 79-80. I am grateful to Ken Olson for drawing my attention to this reference.

regard to redaction-critical argumentation, so that the interpretation offered will not rest on a debated position. At times I have been forced to make decisions about Luke's sources, and in those cases I have attempted to justify my choices and to offer an analysis that takes account of alternative source-critical judgments.⁶⁸

With regard to Luke's special material, it is difficult to know whether we have to do, in a given instance, with Luke's use of a prior source or his free composition. The recognition of Luke's literary skill, as demonstrated in the many literary parallels between the Gospel and Acts and the purposeful way in which he alters Mark for his own purposes, suggests that however faithful he may have been, in some instances, to the traditions before him, the precise sources of his work often lie hidden behind his own authorial hand. In such cases we may be at a loss to distinguish composition from free redaction and may do best simply to attend to the literary product as it now stands, limiting source-critical and redaction-critical analysis to those sections of the text where

⁶⁸ One of the major lessons of the debate between the proponents of the two-source hypothesis and the Farrer theory is that we do not know with certainty what sources the gospel writers used, in what form, or when they may have used sources now lost to us. We simply do not know what we do not know. In such circumstances it is wise not to dogmatically adopt allegedly simple "solutions" (e.g. the denial of Luke's use of Matthew or the denial of lost sources) simply because "solving" the synoptic problem is rationally satisfying.

we may hope to know something with relative confidence. Such is the approach of the present study: the text itself, and not its sources, is given first place.

1.2.3 The Date and Location of the Gospel and the Identity and Situation of the Author

If Luke's gospel followed Mark's, and if the later was written close to the time of the Jewish War, Luke's gospel was probably written shortly afterwards. Fitzmyer dates the work to the early 80's of the first century C.E., and though he posits a geographical location in Antioch in Syria, he admits the absence of any strong historical attestation and the speculative nature of attempting to locate Luke anywhere outside Palestine with certainty.⁶⁹ I am inclined to agree with both of these conclusions, though the present analysis does not rest on either assumption.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:53-57.

⁷⁰ However, the theory that Luke wrote from Antioch, a city with a large Jewish population, helps to situate the textual dynamics observed in this study within a social setting in which Jews, Christians, and Jewish Christians lived in close proximity to one another. Though a number of scholars have argued for a second century date for canonical Luke and/or Acts, I find the arguments of Fitzmyer persuasive (*Luke*, 1:53-57). See also Andrew Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts in the Period Before Irenaeus*, WUNT 2 169 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003). For a second century date, see Joseph Tyson, *Marcion and Luke-Acts*; Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2003), 251-295; Shelly Matthews, *Perfect Martyr*, 5-6, 27-53.

In view of the patriarchal nature of the ancient world, the historical likelihood, though by no means certainty, that the author was male explains my use of masculine pronouns throughout this work. This stylistic decision enables my prose, which frequently refers to the author and the author's choices, to employ a consistent, singular pronoun. The reader must judge whether this decision assists or impedes clarity. It is a matter of convenience and of concord with general practice of ecclesial and academic tradition that I refer to the third evangelist as "Luke." If we had secure knowledge of Luke's precise identity, that knowledge might bear heavily on the questions of the present study. But as such biographical desiderata come to us only in the form of later and conflicting traditions, Luke's precise identity is a riddle best left unsolved, at least as far as the line of inquiry in the present study is concerned.⁷¹ If Luke's identity were a necessary element in the story he tells, he might have told us something about himself. As it stands, he, like the tradition before him, seems to have regarded the story itself as sufficient.

⁷¹ I am inclined to follow tentatively Fitzmyer's judicious acceptance of the tradition expressed in Irenaeus that the author was Luke the physician, the companion of Paul (cf. Col 4:14; Philem 24; cf. 2Tim 4:11), though with Fitzmyer's proviso that Luke's association with Paul was limited. Precisely because this tradition is uncertain, however, it must not be pressed into exegetical service. See Fitzmyer, "The Authorship of Luke-Acts Reconsidered," in *Luke the Theologian: Aspects of his Teaching* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 1-26. For a rejection of this traditional view of authorship that retains Fitzmyer's general date, see Sanders and Davies, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels*, 16-18.

The situation in which Luke wrote is important for the present study. As has already been discussed, the assessment of Luke's social location is closely intertwined with the social purposes one identifies in his writing. In what follows I will seek to show, following Philip Esler, that Luke's gospel is intelligible as a text written for a mixed audience of gentile and Jewish Christians. Yet I want to suggest more. If Luke wrote at a time and in a place in which the so-called "parting of the ways" had not yet fully occurred, and if, as I am convinced, he did not himself seek to force such a parting, then it is entirely likely that *Jewish* Christians (if not their gentile counterparts, though that cannot be excluded) lived in close contact with non-Christian Jews. Indeed, the statement that Jesus came to divide members of households against one another suggests an intimate location for the divisions that obtained between those who argued over his identity (Lk 12:52-53). If this was so at the time Luke wrote—a possibility I cannot prove but wish to keep open—then Luke, who wrote to Jewish Christians, may have envisioned non-Christian Jews within the purview of his readership. The proof of this suggestion, of course, will be in the exegesis that follows.

1.2.4 A Limitation of this Study

The chief limitation present study is its limited scope. It deals principally with Luke's gospel and not the Acts of the Apostles. This limitation is substantial, as it is in Acts that the church and its mission take shape and the reception and opposition of that

mission among Jews are directly portrayed. Many passages from Acts bear directly on the claims here advanced but can only be addressed here in passing, in abbreviated form. The speech of Stephen and the ending of Acts are two such passages whose import for the present argument cannot be overstressed. I have tried to mitigate the effects of such lacunae by drawing frequent connections with Luke's second volume, but the scope of this work as a study of the gospel has demanded restraint in this regard. Should reviewers of the present volume fail to dissuade me, I hope to follow it with a related study of identity politics in Acts, in which the arguments put forth here can be extended

There is warrant, however, for studying Luke's gospel in its own right.

Although modern literary studies of Luke-Acts have demonstrated the literary unity of the two works, and ancient readers likely perceived that unity,⁷² early canon lists show that Luke was always grouped with the other gospels, while Acts was grouped with Paul's letters. If, as seems likely, these canonical arrangements reflect something of how the texts were read, the ancient hermeneutical question "How do you read?" (cf. Lk 10:26) may have received somewhat different answers in antiquity than it does in

⁷² The title of Acts in the Syriac Peshitta ascribes the book to "Luke the Evangelist," as do a number of late Greek manuscripts. This awareness of a connection between the gospel and Acts suggests a habit of reading them in light of one another, but it is difficult to know how old this tendency is.

modern scholarship.⁷³ Since Luke in fact wrote two distinct volumes, we may assume he envisioned they would be read as such,⁷⁴ and though the present study presupposes the unity of Luke's oeuvre and so makes frequent reference to Acts, it proceeds from a conviction that Luke's gospel is intelligible in its own right.

1.3 Terminology and History

It is nearly impossible to discuss a text like Luke-Acts without employing, as I have already done, language that is historically freighted with weighty and diverse significations that call its appropriateness into question. Accordingly, some account must be given of my attempt to name ancient realities with words like "Jew," "gentile," "Christian," and their associated cognates and combinations.

As recent debates have reminded us, Ἰουδαῖος refers principally to an inhabitant of the geographical region of Judah, named for the Israelite tribe whose southern

⁷³ As discussed at length in Andrew F. Gregory and C. Kavin Rowe, eds., *Rethinking the Unity and Reception of Luke and Acts* (Columbia SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010).

⁷⁴ This is at least true with regard to the gospel, which was written first and which makes no reference to Acts. However, in referring to Acts as the sequel to his first volume, Luke may intend that his readers will read the latter narrative in light of the former (Acts 1:1).

kingdom, according to the Bible, prospered under the rule of David and his sons.⁷⁵ This region, which even during the exile of the southern kingdom was never totally devoid of Israelite presence, was eventually repopulated more extensively under Ezra and Nehemiah, from which time its inhabitants came to be designated Ἰουδαῖοι (“Judeans”). Shaye Cohen has argued that the term first came to convey what we might call a religious significance, as opposed to a primarily geographic one, when the Maccabees “converted” the Edomites into a united theo-political front through forced circumcision under the military leadership of the aptly named Judas.⁷⁶ But Israel has always been more than a geographically located people, a people for God’s own possession (cf. Ex 19:5-6); accordingly, geographical and political terms have always been able to connote Israel’s ancestral religious life. Occasionally Luke’s use of Ἰουδαῖος appears to have a limited geographical sense,⁷⁷ but his overwhelming tendency is to use the term to denote a person connected via heredity and piety to the people of Israel, rather than a person who inhabits Judea. At Lk 7:3 the “Jews” in question live in Galilee, and at Acts 2:5

⁷⁵ See Steve Mason, “Jews, Judeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History,” *JSJ* 38 (2007): 457-512; Joshua Garroway, “Ioudaios,” in *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Z. Brettler (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 524-26.

⁷⁶ Shaye Cohen, *The Beginning of Jewishness* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 109-139; cf. *Ant.* 13.257; 1Macc 2:46.

⁷⁷ See Acts 10:39 and, perhaps, Lk 23:51. Luke frequently employs the feminine form Ἰουδαία to refer to the region of Judea.

those gathered “from every nation under heaven” are called Ἰουδαῖοι. Likewise, Paul’s missionary activity in the Mediterranean recounts his experience among “Jews” (from Acts 11:19 onward). Whatever the geographical origins of the term Ἰουδαῖος may have been, by Luke’s time the term had a trans-geographical significance.

Importantly, Luke-Acts displays a terminological distinction between those designated Ἰουδαῖοι and the members of the nations who practice Jewish piety as “Godfearers” or who have undergone a circumcision as “proselytes.” Luke distinguishes between Ἰουδαῖοι and προσήλυτοι in Acts 2:11, between Nicolaus the προσήλυτος and the other Hellenistic Jews in Acts 6:5, and between the “many Jews” (πολλοὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων) and “pious proselytes” (τῶν σεβομένων προσηλύτων) in Antioch in Acts 13:43. He maintains the terminological contrast between “Jews” and “Godfearers” in the synagogues of the Diaspora, as in Paul’s speech in Antioch, addressed to “Israelites and those who fear God” (ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλίται καὶ οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν, Acts 13:16; cf. 13:26: ἀδελφοί, υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραάμ καὶ οἱ ἐν ὑμῖν φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν). The same distinction obtains in Thessalonica between “some of the Jews” (τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν [τῶν Ἰουδαίων, v.1]) and the “great multitude of God-fearing Greeks” (σεβομένων Ἑλλήνων πλῆθος πολὺ, Acts 17:4; cf. 17:17). The fact that Cornelius, Luke’s cardinal example of the righteous non-Jew, is never called a προσήλυτος but rather one of the “men who has a foreskin” (Acts 11:3), suggests that προσήλυτος may refer specifically to a male who has undergone circumcision. These

terminological patterns suggest that the term Ἰουδαῖος has a *genealogical* significance in Luke's writings and that Jewishness for Luke is an inherited category, as it is in other Jewish texts such as biblical Ezra, *Jubilees*, and 4QMMT. This conception of Jewishness stands in contrast to the view that Jewish identity could be acquired by gentiles through conversion, as reflected, for instance, in *Joseph and Aseneth*, in the policies of John Hyrcanus and Aristobulus with regard to the Idumeans (Josephus *Ant.* 13.257), and in the debates between Ananias of Charax-Spasini and Eleazar of Galilee over the circumcision of King Izates of Adiabene, whose adoption of Jewish piety is said to be equivalent to his becoming a Ἰουδαῖος (*Ant.* 20.34-48; see esp. 20.39).⁷⁸

Luke's use of Ἰουδαῖος as a genealogical category creates a methodological difficulty for the integration of Luke's narrative presentation with the socio-historical situation in which Luke wrote, for Luke's distinction between προσήλυτοι and Ἰουδαῖοι is difficult to employ in socio-historical analysis, since these groups were closely associated and the distinction between them was not universally acknowledged. Accordingly, when speaking in this study of Luke's social and historical situation, I use

⁷⁸ On the ancient debate about whether gentiles could acquire Jewish identity through conversion, see Christine E. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford: OUP, 2002); Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (Oxford: OUP, 2011); Jill Hicks-Keeton, *Arguing with Aseneth: Gentile Access to Israel's Living God in Antiquity* (Oxford: OUP, 2018).

the terms Jew/Jewish as second-order designations that refer to persons/communities in antiquity who understood themselves to be Jewish and would have been recognized as such by others. The terms thus include not only those who were genealogically connected with the people of Israel but also those who sought to become Jews (i.e. proselytes). When speaking about Luke's narrative portrayal of "Jews" or "Jewish" identity, however, these terms can only mean what they meant in Luke's first order definition, and so they necessarily exclude proselytes.⁷⁹ While the difference between these two definitions might seem to create confusion in a study that seeks to analyze Luke's socio-historical situation and Luke's narrative, in actuality there are very few references to proselytes in Luke-Acts, and none of these bear meaningfully on Luke's portrayal of Jews. Where proselytes appear (Acts 2:11, 6:5, and 13:43), they are closely associated with Ἰουδαῖοι and are presented in a positive light, so that there is in actuality very little semantic distance between "Jewish identity" as something that Luke's gospel portrays and "Jewish identity" as a second-order term designating an ancient reality as seen from the distance of modern socio-historical analysis. The value of this second-

⁷⁹ For a discussion of the distinction between first-order definitions of religious identity, which represent the firsthand viewpoint of the religious persons or communities being studied, and second-order definitions that provide a way of organizing data for an outside observer, see Michael L. Satlow, "Disappearing Categories: Using Categories in the Study of Religion," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 17 (2005): 287-298.

order definition of the term “Jewish” will be apparent in its use in the composite term “Jewish Christian,” discussed below.

Like Ἰουδαῖος, the term ἔθνος is complex. In a Jewish context, when contrasted with Ἰσραήλ or οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, the plural τὰ ἔθνη often refers specifically to the non-Jewish nations.⁸⁰ However, in Jewish usage, Israel is also among the ἔθνη. Israel is frequently called an ἔθνος in the Greek Bible (e.g. Ex 19:6, 23:22; Deut 4:6, 32:8-9; 2Sam 7:23; Jer 38:37; Ps 82:4; 1Chr 17:21), and in later Jewish Greek we find reference to the “nation of the Jews” (ἔθνος τῶν Ἰουδαίων), particularly when used by foreign rulers in matters of state (1Esdr 8:10; 1Macc 8:23-27, 11:30, 15:2) but also more generally (Josephus Ant. 11.184; Philo Mos. 1.7; cf. Lk 7:5, Jn 11:50-52). These observations suggest that the modern English term “gentile” may often be an inappropriate translation for ἔθνος in early Jewish and Christian texts, since its narrower meaning of “non-Jewish” forces a Jew/gentile distinction where it may not have been intended. In Luke’s usage, the singular form ἔθνος is often used to refer to the nation of Israel,⁸¹ but in no case does it refer to a non-Jewish individual. The plural form τὰ ἔθνη always refers to nations other than Israel but it frequently takes on the special meaning of the people who comes from such nations—i.e. gentiles.⁸² In view of Luke’s complexity, the present study will render

⁸⁰ So Neh 5:8; Is 11:1; Ezek 39:7; Joel 3:2; Zech 8:23; 1Macc 4:11, 7:23.

⁸¹ See Lk 7:5, 23:2, 24:47; Acts 2:5 [cf. v. 9–Ἰουδαίαν], 10:22, 24:10, 17, 26:4, 28:19.

⁸² See Lk 2:32, 12:30, 18:32, 21:24; Acts 4:25, 27, 9:15, 10:45, 11:1, 18, 13:46-7, 14:2, 15:7-23, etc.

Luke's use of these terms as seems appropriate to the context, employing the term "gentile" only where the category of non-Jew appears clearly intended as a contrast with Jews. In keeping with what was said above about the meaning of "Jew," "gentile" has a primarily hereditary meaning (though there are undoubtedly religious connotations; cf. Acts 11:28).

It is less clear how to understand the relation of the terms *Ιουδαίος* and *ἔθνος* to *Χριστιανός*. In the earliest Christian usage, *Χριστιανός* appears to be a name assigned by outsiders to members of the Jesus community, rather than a self-appellation. The term does not appear to become common until the second century, and its earlier uses frequently occur in contexts of political accusation and persecution (so Acts 26:28; 1Pet 4:16; Ign. Rom. 3:2; Mart. Pol. 12:1). Even outside such contexts, we find phrases such as "to be found as a Christian" (*εὐρεθῶ τῶν Χριστιανῶν*, *IgnEph* 11:12) and "not only to be called a Christian but to be one" (*μὴ μόνον καλεῖσθαι Χριστιανούς, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἶναι*, *Ign. Mag.* 4:1) that recall the self-consciousness of bearing the name that we find in 1Pet 4:16: "If [you suffer] as a Christian, praise God that you bear that name" (*εἰ δὲ ὡς Χριστιανός...δοξαζέτω δὲ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ*). Its use to describe the mixed but largely non-Jewish congregation in Antioch in Acts 11:26 may reflect its

origin in communities including both Jews and gentiles.⁸³ Douglas Campbell has argued that the term Χριστιανός first referred *only* to pagan believers in Jesus, whereas Jewish believers were simply “messianic Jews.”⁸⁴ Campbell’s claim may find support in the Lukan Paul’s response to Agrippa’s mocking question, “Are you so quickly persuading me to become a Christian?” Paul responds: “I pray to God that not only you but also all who are listening to me today might become *such as I am* (τοιούτους ὁποῖος καὶ ἐγὼ εἶμι)—except for these chains” (Acts 26:28-29). Paul does not renounce the term, either as appropriate for himself or for what he hopes the Jewish king Agrippa might become, and it is thus possible that for Luke the term “Christian” may apply to Jews as well as gentiles. But the Lukan Paul’s language (“of such a kind as I myself am”) shifts the focus away from the name Χριστιανός to his preferred way of indicating his identity as one that stands in continuity with the message of the Jewish prophets (so Acts 26:22, 27).⁸⁵

⁸³ In Acts 11:26, the use of the formal, public language *χρηματίσαι* in a passive sense (coordinated to *ἐγένετο αὐτοῖς*) suggests that the name Χριστιανός was applied to the disciples, rather than employed by them.

⁸⁴ See Douglas Campbell, “Beyond the Torah at Antioch: The Probable Locus for Paul’s Radial Transition,” *JSP*, 4, no. 2 (2014): 213, n.57.

⁸⁵ A preference for self-designations other than “Christian” is evident in several early Syriac sources. See Matthew V. Novenson, *The Grammar of Messianism: An Ancient Jewish Political Idiom and its Users* (New York: OUP, 2017), 230-232; cf. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 23-24. The question remains, however,

The main thing to be learned about the term Χριστιανός from Luke-Acts, however, is that it is not Luke's preferred term for describing Jesus' followers. The two instances of the term in Luke-Acts (Acts 11:26 and 26:28) come from outsiders, as do the three uses of αἴρεσις to describe the movement (Acts 24:5,14, 28:22). From within (that is, in the voice of the narrator and in the voices of the followers of Jesus) the movement and its members are variously designated. Luke notably, but not uniquely, refers to the movement as "the way,"⁸⁶ but more often he uses the term ἐκκλησία ("assembly" or "church").⁸⁷ The phrase "the word of God," which David Pao has gone so far as to call a

whether we should speak in historical terms of two strands of Christianity that were originally *independent*. Acts portrays a growing movement in which the churches of Jewish and non-Jewish constituencies increasingly come to recognize a full and lively communion across ethnic differences. Paul likewise championed a shared spiritual identity for Jewish and gentile Christians (Gal 3:28) that was expressed in the tangible sharing of community resources (so Rom 15:25-27; cf. Acts 11:28-30).

⁸⁶ Cf. Mark 1:2-3 and parallels following Is 40:3/Mal 3:1; Matt 7:13; Jn 14:6; 2Pet 2:2, 15, 21; Did. 1:1-2; 1Clem. 36:1; Barn. 19:12. For Luke's use of the term, see especially Lk 20:21; Acts 9:2, 18:25 (*bis*), 19:9, 23, 22:4, 24:14, 22. The term as a designation of the community is absent in the Pauline corpus.

⁸⁷ It is tempting to translate ἐκκλησία as "assembly" or "congregation," especially because Luke uses the term to refer to non-Christian assemblies (so Acts 7:38; 19:32, 39). However, Luke does not conceive the Christian ἐκκλησία primarily as a gathering in a particular place but as a trans-geographic entity with local instantiations. His reference to the singular church "throughout all Galilee, Judea, and Samaria"

character in Luke's narrative, seems at times to designate the expanding community in which that word is received.⁸⁸ Luke refers twenty-five times in Acts to the "disciples," and approximately twice as often we find the term ἀδελφός used to describe the same people, though the term is also used to designate a common Jewish identity shared among Jewish Christians and non-Christian Jews (e.g. Act 2:29, 37; 3:17; 7:2; 13:26,38; 22:1; 23:1, 5-6; 28:17) or even simply among non-Christian Jews (Acts 28:21). Some form of the term "believer" occurs nearly fifty times and, since it refers exclusively to those within the community of Jesus-followers, is the likeliest candidate for a "Lukan" designation of the members of this community. However, two concerns militate against adopting "believer" as a way to describe the members of the early Jesus movement. The first is practical and moral: non-Christian religious Jews of Luke's day and of ours were and are believers in the God of Israel. They are just not believers in Jesus. While

(ἐκκλησία καθ' ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας, Acts 9:31) demonstrates that a cohesive movement is in view and that the term is acquiring what we may call a catholic sense (cf. Acts 5:11, 15:22).

⁸⁸ See especially the uses at Act 6:7, 12:24. See David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 147-180.

Christians did and do refer to one another as “believers,” the language is hardly suitable for conversations with or about those who also believe in God but do so differently.⁸⁹

The second reason for rejecting this term is historical. Although Χριστιανός was probably not originally a self-designation, it became one, and for a good reason: the designation puts the difference where both Christians and non-Christian Jews agreed it belonged—at allegiance to Jesus as the Christ.⁹⁰ The term is thus a good one for naming what it names: those who are followers of Jesus as the Christ. Moreover, it is confusing and cumbersome to adopt new terminology (e.g. “Jewish believers in Jesus”) when the ancient designation “Christian” identifies more or less clearly what is at stake. This study will therefore use the term “Christian” to designate generally those who followed Jesus as the Christ, the members of what is commonly called the early Christian movement, whom Luke variously identifies as μαθηταί, ἀδελφοί, πιστεύοντες, followers of ἡ ὁδός and members of ἡ ἐκκλησία. The term does not, however, carry an “orthodox” or specifically theological meaning. As a historical descriptor, it names in the most general fashion those who in some way were attached to the movement that venerated Jesus of Nazareth.

⁸⁹ Cf. Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith: A Study of the Interpenetration of Judaism and Christianity*, trans. Norman P. Goldhawk (New York: Harper, 1961).

⁹⁰ So Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, 246-251.

1.3.1 “Jewish Christian” and “Gentile Christian”

As discussed above, this study employs “Jew” as a second-order term that refers broadly to a person who, through genealogical descent or conversion, could be recognized in antiquity as belonging to the people of Israel. Since I employ the term “Christian” as a way of naming the community of the followers of Jesus, it should be clear that the terms are not mutually exclusive. Both terms, for example, may be applied to Paul (Acts 21:39; 26:28), whom we may thus reasonably call a “Jewish Christian.” This use of the term “Jewish Christian,” however, runs contrary to a narrower meaning of the term that envisions a particular form of Torah praxis. Joel Marcus argues that “Jewish Christianity” should be reserved as a designation for persons or groups that observed the Jewish Torah. Christians who observed Torah the way that non-Christian Jews traditionally did were “Jewish,” while those who did not were gentile Christians.⁹¹ This praxis-orientated definition helps focus attention on the place where the *difference* between Jews and non-Jews *within* the Christian community were most evident, perplexing, and problematic—what Boyarin has called “the fleshly practices” of “the

⁹¹ Joel Marcus, “Jewish Christianity,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity. Vol 1: Origins to Constantine*, ed. Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young (Cambridge: University Press, 2006), 87-102; cf. Marcel Simon, “Réflexions sur le Judéo-Christianisme,” *Christianity, Judaism, and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty*, ed. Jacob Neusner, SJLA 12 (Leiden: Brill, 1975): 2:53-76.

historical, physical people of Israel.”⁹² This way of conceiving Jewish Christianity runs counter to a much broader vision of “Jewishness” envisioned by Jean Daniélou, for whom the phrase “Jewish Christianity” includes *most* of early Christian praxis and thought as basically Jewish in origin and orientation.⁹³ Marcus’s critique of Daniélou’s tendency to regard almost everything in early Christianity as “Jewish” is a reasonable historical concern to not draw the circle of “Jewish Christianity” so broadly that the category does not distinguish much. However, this Torah-based definition of “Jewish Christianity” runs into the problem of which aspects of Torah are considered central. For Marcus, the observance of Sabbath, the keeping of laws of *kashrut*, and the practice of circumcision are the most common identifying marks distinguishing some Christians as “Jewish.”⁹⁴

But what is true of the modern world was also true in antiquity: Jews did not keep Torah equally, but they did not for that reason cease to be Jews. Philo, the great Hellenistic allegorizer of the Jewish Torah, nevertheless was not the most liberal Jew in

⁹² Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 29.

⁹³ See Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, trans. John A. Baker (London: Darton, Longman, & Todd, 1964).

⁹⁴ Marcus, “Jewish Christianity,” 88-90. For Boyarin, it is these “fleshly practices,” and not others, which characterize Israel’s “historic community” and which, when absent among Christians, justifies the historian’s use of the label “gentile Christianity” (*Border Lines*, 29).

Alexandria. In the *Migration of Abraham*, he laments the neglect of the literal keeping of the law by some of his fellow Jews, who were so refined in their philosophical exegesis of Torah that they adopted a purely symbolic interpretation and neglected the “fleshly practices” of Israel (*Abr.* 16.86-93). But it does not occur to Philo to question their Jewishness. Nor did the early rabbis deny the Jewishness of the *am ha'aretz*, whose neglect of Torah they lamented.⁹⁵ Rather, for these Jewish thinkers, “Jewishness” carried with it a religious identity and obligation, whether or not that obligation was faithfully carried out. The broader definition of “Jewish” as referring to the people in antiquity who saw themselves as Jews certainly has the effect of widening the area of historical inquiry from that proposed by Marcus. But if a more comprehensive definition of Jewishness (one that has precedent both in antiquity and in modern Jewish law) has the effect of sensitizing our historical awareness to the diversity of early Christians who thought of themselves as Jews and of inviting us to reconsider their relations both to their non-Christian Jewish brethren and to their non-Jewish Christian brethren, this hardly seems a liability. This wider scope is, in fact, precisely what is needed to comprehend the dynamics of Jewish acceptance and rejection of the Christian gospel in the narrative of Luke-Acts, and it will greatly facilitate our historical imagination as to

⁹⁵ They are not, for example named among those excluded from כל ישראל and its share in the world to come in *m. Sanhedrin* 10:1-4.

how these texts may have functioned in a world in which “Jew” and “Christian” substantially overlapped.

A similar problem of terminology obtains with the use of the term “gentile Christianity.” Unless this term is conceived as designating the broadly ethnic background of its constituents, “gentile Christianity” is a historically confusing misnomer. As the work of Daniélou on the theology of early Jewish Christianity and that of G. Rouwhorst on early Christian liturgy have shown, the influence of Jewish thought and practice upon Christian life was early, pervasive, and indelible.⁹⁶ Of this fact the New Testament texts bear sustained witness. Unless, then, we restrict ourselves to an ethnic meaning of “gentile,” we must conclude, with Johannes Munck, that, “As far as primitive Christianity is concerned, ‘Gentile Christianity’ posits something which never existed outside the thought of the Tübingen School.”⁹⁷ Eventually, as Munck observes, a form of non-Jewish Christian life dissociated from Jewish Christianity did develop,⁹⁸ but even here the vestiges of the original connection to Jewish Christianity remain, such that the Christian *adversus Judeos* tradition signifies a sort of oedipal paradox.

⁹⁶ Daniélou, *Theology of Jewish Christianity*; G. Rouwhorst, “Jewish Liturgical Traditions in Early Syriac Christianity,” *VC* 51 No.1 (March 1997): 72-93.

⁹⁷ Munck, *Acts of the Apostles*, xxxii.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, xxxi.

While diversity in both ethics and ethnic background characterized early Christianity, the notion of an original distinction between essentially different forms of Jewish and gentile Christianity is tacitly reified when the terms designate adherence or non-adherence to particular a mode of Torah praxis. If to be a “Jewish Christian” means to value circumcision, Sabbath, and *kashrut*, then “gentile Christianity” can be imagined as that strain of early Christian life that had, as Boyarin asserts, “neither a sense of genealogical attachment to the historical, physical people of Israel (Israel according to the flesh), nor an attachment (and frequently the exact opposite of one) to the fleshly practices of that historical community.”⁹⁹ But such a generalization hardly accounts for the Pauline communities of pagan converts Boyarin is attempting to describe. These gentile Christians, instructed by Jewish Christian missionaries and taught from the Jewish scriptures, shared many of the same practices as their non-Christian Jewish neighbors—fasting, abstinence from sexual promiscuity, abstention (in some cases) from meats offered to idols, and the communal sharing of resources—all *fleshly* practices inherited from Judaism. Generalizations such as Boyarin here makes thus risk a great truncation of the historical diversity of early gentile Christianity, much of which we should surely conceive of as a body of ethnically non-Jews deeply dependent, to varying degrees, upon Jewish Christianity and ultimately upon the religious heritage of Israel.

⁹⁹ Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 29.

The assumption that what was *really* Jewish was neglected by “gentile Christians” who instead developed a disintegrated “religion” obscures the fact that what was at stake in debates within the Jewish and non-Jewish strains of the early church and between Christians and non-Christian Jews was the question of what was truly central to “the hope of Israel” (cf. Acts 28:20).

I suggest that the clearest way to find our way through the texts and histories of early Judaism and Christianity is to limit the meaning of the term “Jewish” to membership in the people of Israel via genealogy or conversion, and to use the word “Christian” only in the broadest sense as designating some sort of devotion to Jesus of Nazareth. *The terms “gentile Christian” and “Jewish Christian” thus designate the communities of origin, broadly conceived, of those persons devoted to Jesus.*¹⁰⁰ This is in keeping with Boyarin’s later, sound judgment that “only one valuable distinction [is] to be made” with regard to identity in early Christianity—namely the distinction “between

¹⁰⁰ This ethnic category is of course easier to conceive in ideal terms. The difficulty of identifying individuals with mixed parentage exposes the limits of the duality, but the limits of the binary Jew/gentile do not invalidate that binary as an important feature of Jewish self-consciousness, as the negotiation of such complexity through the law of matrilineal descent makes clear. Similarly, the term “Christian” may or may not designate Eliezer ben Hyrcanus in the judgment of a rabbinic or ecclesial court, but the questions of categorization that his story raises do not invalidate the use of the term. The questions raised by borderline cases are instructive, but we need not make our language the site for inscribing in detail our answers to their complexity. On Eliezer’s case, see Boyarin, *Dying for God*, 22-41.

Christians who had come from the Jewish world (self-identified as Jews = *ek twn Ioudaiwn*) and those who came from the gentiles (*ek twn ethnwn*).¹⁰¹ Although Boyarin is happy to speak of Christians (in the simple sense I have used the term) “from among the Jews,” he nonetheless argues that the term “Jewish Christian” is an inherently heresiological term that reifies the patristic distinction between forms of heterodox Christianity that were “too-Jewish” and the “orthodox” faith.¹⁰² The history of scholarship, which Boyarin deftly traces, may in fact suggest such a conclusion, but since the phrase “Christians who had come from the Jewish world” rolls slowly off the tongue, I refer to such people as “Jewish Christians” and those who did not come from the Jews as “gentile Christians.” In this way I hope to put our inherited terminology to work rather than endlessly creating neologisms.¹⁰³

One final matter of terminology requires attention. While the academic study of religion frequently refers to a process of “identity construction,” the third evangelist did not understand himself to be constructing his or anyone else’s identity. Rather, Luke

¹⁰¹ Boyarin, “Rethinking Jewish Christianity,” 33.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰³ As Emanuel Fiano suggests in his review of the concept of Jewish Christianity, “The Construction of Jewish Christianity in the Twentieth Century: The Cases of Hans-Joachim Schoeps and Jean Daniélou,” in *Patristic Studies in the Twenty-First Century: Proceedings of An International Conference to Mark the 50th Anniversary of the International Association of Patristics Studies*, eds. Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony, Theodore De Bruyn, and Carol Harrison (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2015), 290-291.

writes with the conviction that it was *God*, in fulfillment of promises made to Israel, who was extending the ministry of the resurrected Jesus through the divinely sent Spirit in a community that was being formed, maintained, and guided by God's continued activity through his apostolic witnesses. The account of religious identity given by the modern discipline of religious studies is thus far removed from what Luke understood himself to be giving through his narrative of "the things fulfilled among us" (Lk 1:1). It is of course patently true that Luke's narrative presents historians with the interpretive problem of representation and reality, for Luke is selective and purposeful in his telling of this story, as are all historians. My point is not to eschew critical historiography but to mark the distance between modern academic approaches to history and the approach to the recent, historic past in Luke-Acts. Luke's work is without a doubt a purposeful and creative literary act. But it is not, in his own view at least, a *creatio ex nihilo*. Rather, as his preface to the catechumen Theophilus indicates, our author wishes to communicate certainty about the work of *God*.¹⁰⁴ As a way of respecting the seriousness of the distance between Luke's claims about God and God's work and the interpretive claims made in this study about Luke and Luke's work, I will speak in what follows of

¹⁰⁴ Were it to be argued that such a claim to divinely established identity is an attempt to evade the inherently human (and therefore contestable) element in the construction, Luke might admit the human character of his work (he does not claim inspiration) but nevertheless assert the basic claim that his message about God is true, a claim which cannot be negated (or affirmed) by observing that it is distinctly Luke's own.

Luke's "identity portrayal" rather than "identity construction," a term that risks blurring the distinction between the analysis of a religious text and essentializing claims about the dynamics by which religious phenomena may be said to come into existence. In this way the book will seek as much as possible to describe "from the inside" Luke's way of thinking about identity.

1.4. The Argument of this Book

The major premise of this book is that, in the Gospel of Luke, the identities of those who would later inhabit the division brought about in Israel by the crisis of Jesus' advent, death, and resurrected embodiment in the community of the church are foreshadowed in the narrative of Jesus' life, a life in which that crisis and division are anticipated and which, strikingly, serves as the paradigm for later Christian existence. My central claim, on the basis of this premise, is that the identities thus adumbrated are not portrayed, "constructed," or given meaningful shape through opposition to one another. Inasmuch as non-Christian Jewish others are prefigured in the opposition to Jesus by opponents in the gospel, such persons are not finally condemned but rather called to discipleship through Jesus' prophetic presence and, after his death, through the continuation of the Jesus-like encounter with Israel through the witness of the church. Similarly, early Christian identity, as anticipated in the community of Jesus' disciples, is neither glorified nor characterized in thoroughgoing opposition to these Jewish others.

Rather, through his narrative Luke calls early Christians to repentance and the purgation of discipleship. Within Luke's historical vision, both groups inhabit an *unfinished* story. In that story, the crisis of Jesus' first coming anticipates the crisis of his second coming and imparts to the period between these two advents a proleptic anticipation of a future judgment. The church's kerygmatic announcement of this judgment, which will be exercised with regard to Christian insiders and Jewish outsiders alike, includes a call for repentance that discloses the real prospect of a reformation of life prior to that judgment, a reformation for which, in both cases, Luke earnestly hopes. In this way the "identities" of various groups are explicated not through opposition to one another but by the relation both sustain to the prior and future acts of God.

In terms of social history, a secondary and more modest claim of this book is that Luke's portrayal of early Christian and non-Christian Jewish identities should be reasonably situated in a historical context in which the Christian mission to the Jews was not over, despite its mixed and sometimes disappointing results. Toward such others as rejected this mission, Luke does not relax his prophetic message or its critiques, but neither does he demonize those who, as he hopes, may yet adopt its way of life as the way of God. In this way, his work stands as a genuine appeal for conversion in one of the very earliest chapters of Jewish/Christian dialogue, a chapter in which the modern premise that participants in interreligious dialogue should not seek to convert one

another has yet to be conceived. These two claims, taken together, constitute a suggestion that scholars of late-ancient religion re-think common assumptions regarding the relation between ideational struggle and social history, for if the argument advanced below is sound, the relation between identity and alterity in Christian antiquity may, at some points at least, have been much different than has frequently been imagined.

2. Jesus and Israel in the Lukan Introductions

2.1. *The Lukan Preface*

Much has been written about Luke's preface to his gospel.¹ The definitive study of Loveday Alexander, in which Luke's facility with compositional conventions of Hellenistic historiographers is extensively demonstrated, has not been surpassed or refuted.² While it is possible, as Alexander observes, that the Theophilus to whom the work is addressed was a benefactor of the work, nothing certain is known about him. But aside from the fact that Luke has undertaken to explicate certain matters via a narrative (instead of, say, an epistolary diatribe), two additional observations from the preface should bear upon how we read that narrative. The first of these is that Luke understands his work as a "narrative about the things that have been fulfilled among us" (διήγησιν περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων, 1:1). Luke thus understands himself to inhabit a community that he believes has witnessed and participated in the actions of God, whose work in Luke's community is glossed as

¹ Lk 1:1-4 is one long sentence that ably demonstrates, as well as anything else in the Lukan corpus, the author's rhetorical capabilities in the Greek language. See H. J. Cadbury in *The Style and Literary Method of Luke* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1920) and *The Making of Luke-Acts* (London: S.P.C.K, 1958).

² Loveday Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Conventions and Social Context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1*, SNTS 78 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

fulfillment. As Luke's work elsewhere makes clear, this "fulfillment" in Luke's story has reference to a prior story, narrated in Israel's scriptures, which Luke's story thus continues (cf. Lk 24:44; Acts 3:18, 13:27). In this way a key element in Luke's set of concerns—the manner in which his story is *dependent upon* the story of Israel—is signaled in his opening verse. The second important observation about Luke's preface is that this fulfillment requires explication "in order that you may know the truth of the things about which you have been instructed" (1:4). Although Luke presupposes some initial instruction of Theophilus, a basic familiarity with the Christian gospel and the history of the early church may not be adequate to ensure a true, undistorted understanding (ἀσφάλεια, v.4).³ Even the existence of "many" gospels prior to Luke

³ Although form-critics have tended to refer to the *kerygma* of the early church as a relatively succinct message about Jesus, Jervell argues that the early church's proclamation about Jesus was also inherently connected to its message about how Jesus continued to be operative in the life of the church. See Jervell, "The Problem of Tradition in Acts," in Jervell, *Luke and the People of God: A New Look at Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972), 19-39. This means, among other things, that *kerygma* and *historia* were not discrete categories in earliest Christianity. On this connection see C. Kavin Rowe, "The Kerygma of the Earliest Church," in *Beyond Bultmann: Reckoning a New Testament Theology*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker and Mikeal C. Parsons (Waco: Baylor Press, 2014), 23-37. The truth περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων thus comprehends the story of Jesus and the story of the church, which are not entirely separable. This means that Luke's narrative of the life of Jesus may turn out to contain a message that is surprisingly relevant to the contemporary situation in which Luke writes.

(πολλοί, 1:1) does not appear to have been sufficient to answer questions raised about the nature of God's fulfillment. For those answers, Luke seems to believe we need his story.

2.2 The Birth Announcements of John and Jesus

Following a demonstration of facility in Hellenistic rhetorical style, Luke suddenly switches linguistic registers, inviting the reader into the syntax and story of Jewish history:

Now it came to pass (ἐγένετο) in the days of Herod the king of Judea that there was a certain priest by the name of Zachariah of the order of Abijah, and (καί) his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And (καί) they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commands and ordinances of the Lord. And (καί) they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren. And (καί) they both were advanced in their days. (Lk 1:5-7)⁴

By introducing his narrative with ἐγένετο followed by a densely articulated series of narrative details joined through four instances of parataxis, Luke ushers his reader into

⁴ All translations of biblical texts are my own unless otherwise noted.

the narrative world of Jewish sacred history embodied in the Septuagint.⁵ What follows is thus to be understood as continuous with Israel's story. In Luke's extension of this story, the first individuals that readers meet are Jewish persons whose exemplary religious character Luke emphasizes by showing how they stand in continuity with the scripture Luke's style evokes. There is good reason for this: Elizabeth is the first human character in Luke's story who proclaims the identity of Jesus upon hearing the greeting of his mother and being herself filled with the Holy Spirit (1:41-45). Zachariah is similarly inspired and proclaims in the words of the *Benedictus* the longest of the Lukan canticles (1:67-79). The story of Elizabeth and Zachariah is thus Luke's first account of the reception of the messianic message among the people of Israel. Accordingly, the events of Luke's first chapter contain, *in nuce*, the key thematic elements of the narrative that follows.

Luke does not explicitly name either Zachariah or Elizabeth as Israelites or Jews; he seems to assume that the reader knows enough to infer their Jewish identity and even

⁵ According to François Bovon, "The language imitates that of the LXX. This indicates that the author intends to be counted among the legitimate successors of the Scriptures" (Bovon, *Luke 1*, 30). The use of ἐγένετο at the beginning of the narrative is patterned after the biblical style, familiar among Jewish communities of Luke's day, of the Greek translations of יָרַח in the Hebrew Bible. See, for comparison, Gen 34:25, Num 7:1, Josh 4:18, Judg 15:1, 2Sam 1:1, Ruth 1:1-2. For a sustained analysis of Luke's linguistic register, the findings of which support the interpretation offered here, see Jonathan M. Watt, *Code-Switching in Luke-Acts*, Berkeley Insights in Linguistics and Semiotics 31 (New York: Peter Lang, 1997).

their geographical location in Jerusalem from the brief reference to Zachariah serving “before God” and being chosen by lot to enter “the sanctuary of the Lord” (1:8-9). Early gentile readers of Luke’s gospel may have glossed over the references to the obscure priestly order of Abijah, but for readers acclimated to Israel’s scriptures, these references may have evoked a sense of continuity with Israel’s sacred history and cult. The mention of the order of Abijah does not appear rich with meaning and comes, in all likelihood, simply from the tradition on which Luke is dependent. Nevertheless, the reference identifies the first character introduced by Luke as one who stands within a particular tradition of sacred service (cf. 1Chr 24:10).

Elizabeth’s descent “from the daughters of Aaron” likewise would have been relatively meaningless to gentile readers unconcerned with Israel’s priestly lineage. For Jewish readers, however, this introduction of Elizabeth establishes a living, genealogical connection to the righteous in Israel’s past. This connection between the religious life of Israel, particularly its priestly life, in which matters of ritual and genealogical purity were focused, and the birth of the Christian movement works positively in two directions. The connection to the priestly line of Israel grants legitimacy to Zachariah and Elizabeth; likewise, their positive role in the story of the birth of John and the movement he heralds affirms the sanctity of the hereditary line from which they come. Beyond a merely symbolic gesture toward continuity with the biblical priesthood, the introduction of Elizabeth may have held halakic significance for Jewish readers. Lev

21:14 specifies the biblical limits of whom a high priest is allowed to marry; he must take a “virgin from among *his peoples*” (בתולה מעמיו). The plural form of עם creates an interpretive difficulty. The singular form would be expected if the rule referred to any Israelite woman, as rabbinic law in fact holds (though see the discussion at *b. Yevamot* 77b, which allows him to marry a woman descended from converts). However, the plural form of מעמיו in Lev 21:14 likely refers to a woman from the priestly line, in light of the presence of the same form at Lev 21:1, where the reference is to the close family of the priest (cf. vv.2-4).⁶ Zachariah is not the *high* priest, but, as Christine Hayes discusses, the marriage of priests was subject to narrower legal restrictions in late biblical and early Second Temple Judaism than in the Torah.⁷ In view of the concern among some Second Temple Jews for genealogical purity in the priestly line, Luke’s statement that Elizabeth was of priestly descent may be part of his desire to portray her, along with Zachariah, as “righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord”

⁶ As argued by Baruch Levine, *JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 145. Levine’s interpretation was anticipated by Rashbam in the medieval period; see *Rashbam’s Commentary on Leviticus and Numbers: An Annotated Translation*, ed. and trans. Martin I. Lockshin, BJS 330 (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 2001), ad loc.; cf. Lockshin, “Whom May a Kohen Gadol Marry?” <http://thetorah.com/whom-may-a-kohen-gadol-marry/>.

⁷ Christine Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford: OUP, 2002) 68-91.

(Lk 1:6). This brief presentation of the aged couple thus discloses Luke's admiration for the Torah piety of faithful Jews.

This fidelity is correlated to God's own fidelity to Israel as expressed in the arrival of the angel Gabriel in the temple. When Gabriel arrives, he announces that Zachariah's prayers have been answered and that Elizabeth will bear a son who will go before the Lord to return many of the people of Israel to God (1:13-17). The old man explains that he and his wife are advanced in years, at which point he is rebuked and struck dumb for his unbelief. Through this encounter, Luke introduces a second motif into his portrayal of Jewish identity—one that will exercise substantial force later in his narrative. The gospel of heavenly intrusion into earthly events confronts its recipients as a shock, due to the startlingly impossible and inappropriate nature of its claims. Contrary to the expected order of things, according to which Zachariah and Elizabeth *ought* to have had children earlier but were kept from doing so (cf. 1:25), God's deliverance of Israel will now eventuate through an unexpected herald (cf. 1:68). Luke thus anticipates a theme he develops later: God's eschatological fidelity to Israel contains an element of disrupting surprise.

If Luke had not narrated events otherwise, Zachariah might reasonably be forgiven for his initial disbelief of the angelic announcement. In light of his place within the tradition of the doubting patriarch Abraham (Gen 17:17), the doubting protests of Moses (Ex 3:11, 13; 4:1, 14), and the requests for signs to accompany divine messages by

Gideon (Judg 6:36-40) and Hezekiah (2Kgs 20:8), Zachariah appears as one more instance in a biblical series of holy disbelief among recipients of divine messages. But for Luke this failure to perceive and embrace the angel's message is a point worth emphasizing: he portrays Zachariah as squarely at fault through Gabriel's rebuke, Zachariah's ensuing temporary disablement, and his eventual restoration following obedience to Gabriel's instruction. The angel's stern rebuke of the unbelieving Zachariah's request for a sign would seem to anticipate the later rebuke by Jesus of "this wicked generation" who "seeks for a sign" (Lk 11:29). The theme of unbelief, which will play such a prominent role later in Luke's narrative, is thus subtly introduced.

Nevertheless, it is an interpretive mistake to confuse a literary intimation of one of Luke's major theological themes with a determined and univocal theological judgment. It is true that the unbelief of Zachariah (οὐκ ἐπίστευσας, 1:20) is contrasted with the inspired response of Elizabeth and with the belief of Mary (μακαρία ἡ πιστεύσασα ὅτι ἔσται τελείωσις τοῖς λελαλημένοις αὐτῇ παρὰ κυρίου, 1:45), and that this contrast expresses Luke's concern to juxtapose two types response to divine messengers and to commend belief over unbelief. But the responses of Zachariah and Mary display a common psychology and structure: Zachariah skeptically asks, "How will I know this? For I am an old man (κατὰ τί γνώσομαι τοῦτο; ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι πρεσβύτης, 1:18), while

Mary wonders, “How shall this be, since I am unmarried? (πῶς ἔσται τοῦτο, ἐπεὶ ἄνδρα οὐ γινώσκω; 1:34).⁸ Each gives a reason which the speaker knows should, in normal circumstances, invalidate Gabriel’s words. The responses of doubt and wonder thus express a shared mode of encountering the impossible. Even Elizabeth, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is filled with wonder at the presence of the unborn Jesus and his mother (πόθεν μοι τοῦτο...; 1:43). When considered in light of one another, these various reactions of Luke’s characters to an unlikely message would seem to lead the reader to the conclusion that, even among the righteous, the acts of God are surprising and that there is a fine line between wonder and disbelief. If the righteous priest who serves in the inner sanctuary responds with doubt, we may reasonably expect that others in Luke’s narrative will respond to John and to Jesus in similar ways.

Despite Zachariah’s initial disbelief and rebuke by the angel, he is not a flat character. He is eventually freed from disablement to exult in prophetic praise to God “filled with the Holy Spirit” (1:67). The fact that this reversal occurs once Zachariah has heeded the angel’s command and named his son John suggests that Luke is subtly introducing into this episode a third theme that will characterize the ministry of the one who will “turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God” and “make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (1:16-17)—the theme of repentance. Repentance is a key

⁸ The decisive difference, of course, is Mary’s explicit acceptance: ἰδοὺ ἡ δούλη κυρίου· γένοιτό μοι κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου (1:38; cf. 1:45).

element in the preaching of John, Jesus, and the apostles (Lk 3:3, 5:32; Acts 2:38, 3:19; 5:31; 26:20). It is repentance, Jesus says, that distinguishes between the people of Nineveh and the present “wicked generation,” for the inhabitants of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah (11:29-32).⁹ What we learn from the story of Zachariah, as it is set alongside that of Elizabeth and Mary, is that the gospel message is unfathomable even to those who accept it and that those who initially doubt its truth may eventually be found singing its praises.

When the singing begins in Luke’s first chapter the themes implicit in the narrative rise to the surface: God is demonstrating fidelity to Israel, while the faithful in Israel express their allegiance to God. Mary magnifies the Lord who “has helped his servant Israel, remembering mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, on behalf of Abraham and his offspring forever” (1:54-55). The Lord’s ongoing fidelity to Israel on behalf of the promises made to the ancestors suggests that this mercy “for those who fear him from generation to generation” (1:50) is an enduring reality that will not be cancelled if one generation becomes characterized by disobedience, for Mary speaks in the same breath of “those who are proud in the thoughts of their hearts” whom God has scattered

⁹ It is remarkable that Luke likens the role of Jesus with respect to his generation to the role of Jonah among the people of Nineveh (Lk 11:30). Like Jesus’ words to “this generation,” the preaching of Jonah was bereft of any explicit offer of repentance: “Forty days more and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” (Jonah 3:4, NRSV).

and of the powerful and rich whom God has dethroned and sent away empty (1:52-53). In other words, the promise enunciated in 1:50 persists despite the stubbornness described in 1:52-53. Moreover, the statement “for those who fear him” implies that there are some who do not, as do the final words angelic *In Excelsis*: “on earth peace among people of favor” (2:14).¹⁰ This possibility that God’s favor makes a distinction between the righteous and unrighteous in Israel is, of course, part of Jewish scripture and tradition.¹¹

It is possible to interpret this poetic duality of judgment and mercy as reflecting the duality of Israel and the nations, so that Mary would be understood as envisioning God’s blessing upon the people of Israel and his judgment upon the gentiles. Kuecker has taken Mary’s apocalyptic poetry in precisely this way, so that Mary’s *Magnificat* reflects a Jewish “out-group hostility” toward gentiles that is “characteristic” of how

¹⁰ On the textual question (εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας vs. εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία), see John T. Carroll, who rightly opts for the genitive εὐδοκίας, which may, as Carroll observes, carry a double-meaning of both divine gracious favor and divine approval of human response to that favor. See John T. Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2012), 68.

¹¹ See for example Ps 95:9-10, in which the psalmist, a descendant of the wilderness generation, recalls God’s judgment upon that entire generation (cf. Num 14:26-35) while nevertheless claiming, “He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand” (Ps 95:7, NRSV). A similar affirmation of God’s mercy to the whole of Israel, despite the eschatological judgment of some of its members, is present in *m. Sanhedrin* 10.1.

privileged groups typically maintain “in-group” benefits.¹² Kuecker does not consider how a poor Jewish mother in Roman Palestine should be considered part of a privileged group. His suggestion that Mary’s song articulates the *antithesis* to Luke’s vision, based on the absence of a statement that Mary was “filled with the Holy Spirit,” is not persuasive (cf. 1:35 and the praise of μακαρία by one explicitly inspired in 1:45). Luke portrays Mary in a favorable light, and the hope in the *Magnificat* for Israel’s salvation and for judgment upon the proud and mighty is repeated in the explicitly inspired words of Zachariah’s *Benedictus*. In addition to suffering from these exegetical oversights, Kuecker’s analysis fails to reckon with the way in which minoritized religious sub-groups express resistance to dominant cultures with which they share a complex relationship. John Howard Yoder famously observed that, although “we are not used to thinking of the maiden Myriam as a Maccabean ... that is precisely what she sounds like.”¹³ The Maccabeans, like the zealots of Jesus’ day, understood the problem of social evil not in terms of a simple moral duality between Israel and the nations but as including the capitulation of many *in Israel* to the evil ways of the nations (so 1Macc 1:11-15; Josephus J.W. 2.118, 433). It is against the backdrop of *this* kind of “nationalism,” which hopes not only for the national vindication of Israel but also for

¹² Kuecker, *The Spirit and the ‘Other,’* 59-61.

¹³ John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 26.

the internal renewal of Israelite society, that that we should read the Jewish hopes of the Lukan canticles (cf. Lk 1:16, 1:77, and 2:34).

This reading of Mary's statement that God has brought down the mighty and raised up the humble (1:52) should be understood in light of Simeon's prophecy that "this child is appointed for the falling and rising of many in Israel" (2:34). Israel, in these statements, is neither rejected nor replaced but is subject to an internal reorganization. Zachariah thus foretells John's role in "giving knowledge of salvation to his people through the forgiveness of their sins" (1:77; cf. 1:16). John's prophetic ministry, according to Luke, was limited to Jews. The conviction that Israel needs salvation through forgiveness of sins and must repent (see esp. Lk 3:8-9) and the sober awareness that some among God's people may experience judgment as well as mercy (Zachariah, we remember, experienced both) does not lead the characters in Luke's introductory chapters to pronounce judgment upon the entire nation.¹⁴ Rather, Mary and Zachariah speak of God's help "to his servant Israel, in remembrance of mercy" (1:54) and of fidelity to "his holy covenant" by "the God of Israel" (1:68, 72).

¹⁴ As the prophets had done (e.g. Is 1:1-4; Jer 2:3, 32:30, Ezek 2:3). In none of these texts, however, is the fate of the nation decided by such denunciations.

2.2 *The Presentations of Jesus in the Jerusalem Temple*

This same positive note of mercy upon the nation (and the absence of national denunciation) is repeated in Simeon's inspired expectation of the "consolation of Israel" (2:25). The meaning of this phrase is certainly to be understood in connection to "the Lord's Christ" (2:26), about whom, upon beholding him, Simeon exclaims quite literally "My eyes have seen your salvation!" (2:30). The prophetess Anna likewise "was speaking about [Jesus] to all those waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem" (2:38). Whatever these national hopes may mean in light of Luke's long story, they suggest that Jesus' advent will, in some way, usher in a national salvation for Israel and Jerusalem. Luke's deliberate presentation of Mary, Zachariah, Simeon, and Anna all speaking this way suggests that the theme of God's affirmation of the covenant with Israel and the advent, in some way, of a national deliverance is a matter of serious theological importance for Luke. The expectations of these passages should thus figure largely in any construal of Luke's posture toward Judaism.

In his widely influential monograph, *The Theology of St Luke*, Hans Conzelmann neglects these chapters on the grounds of the possibility that they did not form part of the 'original' gospel.¹⁵ However, as Joseph A. Fitzmyer observes, the infancy narratives "function as a sort of overture to the Gospels proper, striking the chords that will be

¹⁵ Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961), 18.

heard again and again in the coming narratives.”¹⁶ Sanders, though concurring with Fitzmyer’s assessment of the importance of these chapters in an assessment of Luke’s theology and purpose, nevertheless devotes only three pages to them, most of which is an engagement with the secondary literature. In contrast to Fitzmyer, who reads these chapters as overtures to the narrative that follows, Sanders reads them as foiled hopes that set Luke’s rejection of the Jews in sharp relief.¹⁷

These hopes for Israel’s deliverance are not detached from the nation’s concrete existence and are therefore not easily translatable into a purely metaphorical conceptualization of “Israel” as something other than the nation *kata sarka*. As the words of Anna make clear, it is not an abstract “people of God” that hopes for redemption but the particular city Jerusalem (2:38). The narrative of Luke 1-2 makes clear that Jerusalem is not, as it would become in later Christian thought, a metaphor for the idealized realm of God but the physical city in the land of Judea that housed the temple with which Luke, more than any other evangelist, is preoccupied.¹⁸ It is to the Jerusalem temple that

¹⁶ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:306.

¹⁷ Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts*, 159-162.

¹⁸ See J. Bradley Chance, *Jerusalem, the Temple, and the New Age in Luke-Acts* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988), 35-85. The eschatological reimagination of the city is present in the later Old Testament writings (e.g. Is 44:26, 65:19; Jer 3:17; Zech 8:8, 9:10; Mal 3:4; Tob 13:16-17) and, in various ways, in the New Testament (Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22; Rev 21:2).

the angel Gabriel comes with a glad announcement for Elizabeth and Zachariah, and it is in the temple and its geographical proximity in Judea that the main events of Lk 1-2 occur. With the exception of the annunciation to Mary in Galilee (Lk 1:26), Judea is the scene for the entirety of Lk 1-2—the announcement to Zachariah (1:9), the Visitation and the Song of Mary (1:39-55), the birth of Jesus (2:4-7), the visit of the shepherds (2:8-20), the circumcision, purification, and presentation of Jesus (2:21-38), and the Passover visit of the boy Jesus to the temple (2:41-50). Though it is clear that Jesus resided with his family in Nazareth (2:39-40, 51-52), the important events of his birth and childhood are all to be found in and around the temple. As Chapter 5 will discuss, nearly half of Luke’s gospel (9:51-19:44) dramatizes Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, the city of his death and resurrection. The resurrected Jesus, prior to his ascension from the outskirts of Jerusalem (Lk 24:50), prohibits the apostles from departing from the city until Pentecost (Acts 1:4). Finally, it is in Jerusalem that the church’s authority is localized (cf. Acts 8:1, 14, 15:2, 16:4) and where Paul is found visiting more often than can be discerned from his letters.¹⁹

In light of Luke’s concern with Jerusalem, scholars have puzzled over Lk 2:22-24, which appears to provide evidence that Luke misunderstood two important rites that he

¹⁹ Three visits to Jerusalem are evident from Paul’s letters (Gal 1:18, 2:1; Rom 15:25), whereas Acts records five (9:26, 11:29, 15:2, 18:22, 21:17). On the chronology of the ministry of the historical Paul, see Douglas Campbell, *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014).

portrays taking place within the temple: purification after childbirth and redemption of a firstborn son.²⁰ Lk 2:22 seems to assume that both Jesus and his mother need to be ritually cleansed after childbirth (“when the days of *their* cleansing [του καθαρισμοῦ ἀντῶν] according to the law of Moses were fulfilled”), while the Torah only requires the purification of a mother (“the days of *her* cleansing [καθάρασεως ἀντῆς], Lev 12:4). The possibility that Luke misread the Torah is not directly relevant to Luke’s portrayal of Judaism, but a further consideration of this question leads to an often-overlooked observation about Luke’s narrative aims. Matthew Thiessen has observed, following the work of Joseph M. Baumgarten, that although Leviticus did not explicitly require the purification of a newborn infant, some Second Temple Jews, such as the authors of *Jubilees*, 4Q265, and 4Q266, envisioned the purification of infants along with their mother.²¹ Since ancient attitudes toward ritual purification in Egyptian, Hittite, Greek,

²⁰ According to Bovon (*Luke 1*, 99), the term καθαρισμοῦ ἀντῶν is an awkward attempt to combine the ritual purification of Mary (according to Lev 12:4) with the redemption of the firstborn (according to Ex 13:1-16). For Fitzmyer, “Luke, not being a Palestinian Jewish Christian, is not accurately informed about his custom of the purification of a woman after childbirth” (*Luke*, 1:424).

²¹ See Matthew Thiessen, “Luke 2:22, Leviticus 12, and Parturient Impurity,” 16-29; Joseph M. Baumgarten, “Purification after Childbirth and the Sacred Garden in 4Q265 and Jubilees,” in *New Qumran Texts and Studies: Proceedings of the First Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies Paris 1992*, STDJ 15, eds. George J. Brooke and Florentino Garcia-Martinez (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 3-10; Isaac Oliver, *Torah Praxis after 70*, 417-427.

and Samaritan cultures also reveal a concern for the ritual purification of newborn children, it is more likely than not, Thiessen argues, that Luke's reference to "their purification" reflects not a mistake about what the Torah required but the actual praxis within some strains of Jewish culture.²² If Thiessen is correct, then whatever Lev 12:2 meant originally, Luke 2:22 may have a place alongside other *Jewish* interpretations of that text.

The second error that Luke has allegedly made is to confuse the offering required for this purification with the offering for the redemption of a firstborn son (Ex 13:1-16).²³ The statement in Lk 2:24 that "they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,'" cites Lev 12:8, which specifies the sacrifice required for the purification of a poor parturient, applying this obligation to the cost of the redemption of the firstborn. While it is possible that Luke has sloppily misapplied the requirement of one rite to another, it is also possible that the sacrifice of the birds, which was allowed in the Torah only for the sacrifice of purification, has been inferred as an allowable substitute for the cost for the redemption

²² This is also the conclusion of Oliver, *Torah Praxis*, 417-421.

²³ So John Carroll: "Luke fuses two discrete ritual observances," (*Luke*, 75). This is the basic conclusion of Fitzmyer, who observes that the law of the firstborn does not require any presence in the Jerusalem temple (*Luke*, 1:424-5).

of the firstborn. The price for the redemption of the firstborn is a sheep in Ex 13:13.²⁴ Since a sheep was also used in the sacrifice for the purification of a parturient woman in Lev 12:6, the allowance of a substitution of birds for the price of the redemption of the firstborn according to the principle in Lev 12:8 could be a legal inference whereby a poor family could provide an inexpensive alternative to a sheep in order to redeem a firstborn son. If this were so, then the two offerings would indeed be fused: the poor family would be understood to have done “everything according to the Law of the Lord” in a single offering (Lk 2:39). If this logic guided Luke’s presentation of the ritual practice of the poor, its leniency is in keeping with the Lukan Jesus’ rebuke of a Torah piety that is especially hard on the poor (cf. 11:41-42, 46).

As Isaac Oliver observes, however, the real point in this passage is neither the purification of Mary and Jesus nor the redemption of Jesus as a firstborn son but the *presentation* of Jesus, the son of the Most High (1:32), in the temple.²⁵ In this way the temple scenes of Jesus’ infancy anticipate his baptism, in which the precise function of the rite is less significant than the identity of Jesus attested through its fulfillment (Lk 2:25-27, 36; cf. 3:21-22). If the presence of Jesus before God in the temple is what is central in this scene, the supporting elements are of secondary significance. Jesus’ parents have intended to perform only what the law requires, but Simeon understands

²⁴ Alternatively, Num 18:16 sets the redemption price at five shekels of silver.

²⁵ Oliver, *Torah Praxis*, 426.

something extraordinary to be at work in the entrance into the temple of “the Lord’s Christ” (2:26). By citing the law of the redemption of the firstborn son, Luke does not set aside the cultic context of the revelation to Simeon but associates Jesus’ ritual appearance in the temple with the emergence of God’s firstborn. Luke’s summary of the law of redemption, according to which “every male who opens the womb *shall be called holy to the Lord*” (πᾶν ἄρσεν διανοῖγον μήτραν ἅγιον τῷ κυρίῳ κληθήσεται, Lk 2:23) evokes the memory of Gabriel’s announcement that the Holy Spirit would overshadow Mary so that “the child born will be *called holy*, the Son of God” (τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον κληθήσεται υἱὸς θεοῦ, 1:35).²⁶ Jesus is thus “holy to the Lord” in a sense that both fulfills and eclipses the meaning of the rite of the firstborn’s redemption. As the site of the revelation to Simeon and the fulfilment of the ritual by which Jesus is designated as holy to the Lord, the temple is a principal locus for the disclosure of Jesus’ identity.

Accordingly, several years later the boy Jesus understands that his calling is not to leave the temple but rather to remain constrained by the matters of his Father (ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς μου δεῖ εἶναί με—Lk 2:49). The story is chronologically later, when Jesus is twelve years old (2:42), but it immediately follows the Presentation in a manner that explicates what is anticipated in the earlier episode: it is in the temple, more than anywhere else, that Jesus seems to think he belongs (cf. 9:51, 19:46). He is thus willing to

²⁶ This intratextual connection may help explain Luke’s modification of the syntax of Ex 13:2 in Lk 2:23.

part with his parents for an apparently indefinite time. Only after their anxious three-day search, about which Jesus seems baffled, does he consent to return home to Nazareth. But he does not do so without rebuking his parents' ignorance of a destiny bound up with his remaining in the temple: "Why were you seeking me? Did you not know...?" (2:49). The statement in 2:51 that "he went down with them and came to Nazareth and *was in subjection to them*" (καὶ ἦν ὑποτασσόμενος αὐτοῖς) suggests, in light of Jesus' preference for remaining in the Jerusalem temple, that he was obedient to his parents against his will and would have preferred to remain, like Samuel, as a youth in the service of the temple (1Sam 1:22-24).²⁷

If the temple is thus portrayed by Luke as the site of heavenly announcements, inspired prophecies, and pious sacrifices; the locus of learning in the matters of Jewish religion; and above everything else, the place where the Messiah belongs; it is, we should conclude, the place where God's fidelity to Israel is demonstrated.²⁸ This celebration of the visitation of God's salvation to the people (2:30; cf. 7:6) is focused on the advent of "the Lord's Christ," whom Simeon declares to be, in his person, "the glory

²⁷ Observed by Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:425.

²⁸ If Luke had intended to critique the temple as a place of inherent idolatry, as some readings of Stephen's speech assert, the portrayal of temple-based piety in these early chapters could hardly be part of the same vision. Luke's vision stands at some distance from what is said in Jn 4:21-23 about the coming hour of true, spiritual worship that does not need a temple.

of your people Israel" (2:26, 32). Simeon thus expresses, as did Mary before him, what the narrative of Luke's first two chapters makes patently clear: in Jesus God "has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy" (1:54). Later in Acts, a similar summary of Jesus' ministry identifies him as God's glorified servant who was sent to bless the nation with repentance (Acts 3:13, 26). This identification of Jesus' life with the destiny of the nation is thus a key element of Lukan christology.

In view of Simeon's focus upon the salvation, consolation, and glorification of Israel, it is noteworthy that his prophecy contains a fourth element that is central to the question of Luke's portrayal of Jewish and Christian identities: the revelation of God to the nations. This welcome of gentiles into God's salvation has been understood by some scholars to indicate Luke's universalistic vision of history, in which the exclusivity of Jewish particularity will be replaced by a more inclusive, less particularistic movement that knows no distinction between Jew and gentile (cf. Gal 3:28). However, in Simeon's prophecy there is no competition between the revelation of God's salvation in Jesus to the nations and the special fidelity of God to Israel. For Simeon, Jesus is intended as *both* "a light for revelation to the gentiles and glory to your people Israel" (2:32). The strong allusion made in the *Nunc Dimittis* to Is 42:6 and 49:6 confirms this non-competitive dual concern for Israel's salvation and the generous extension of that salvation to the world,

for this amicable duality is a key element of the Isaian servant songs, particularly in the Greek version in which they were read by Luke:²⁹

Jacob is my servant; I will help him,

Israel is my chosen, whom my soul receives;

I have put my spirit upon him [cf. Is 61:1, Lk 4:18];

he will bring forth justice to the nations...

I the Lord God, I have called you in righteousness,

and I will take you by the hand and strengthen you.

And I have given you as a covenant for the *race* (εἰς διαθήκην γένους),

a light to the nations (εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν). (Is 42:1, 6 LXX)

And now thus says the Lord, who formed me in the womb as his servant,

to gather Jacob and Israel to him,

²⁹ Noteworthy differences from the Hebrew text are given in italics. The translations of Greek text of Isaiah are my own and are based on the critical text of Joseph Ziegler, ed., *Isaias, Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum graecum auctoritate academiae scientiarum Göttingensis editum* 14, 3rd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983). On Luke's use of the Greek version of Isaiah in general and his utilization of the servant motif of Deutero-Isaiah in particular, see Peter Mallen, *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts*, LNTS 367 (New York: T&T Clark International, 2008).

I shall be gathered and glorified (δοξασθήσομαι) before the Lord,
and my God shall be my strength.

He said to me,

“It is a great a thing for you that you should be called my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the *Dispersion* of Israel;

Behold! I have made you *a covenant for the race* (εις διαθήκην γένους),
a light to the nations (εις φῶς ἐθνῶν),
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” (Is 49:5-6 LXX)

Importantly, the extension of God’s salvation to the nations in these oracles does not involve any coordinate retraction of the blessings from Israel. On the contrary, the specification of the identity of the unnamed servant as *Jacob/Israel* in Is 42:1 by the Greek translator has the effect of underscoring Israel’s special status and grounding God’s fidelity to the people. This tendency of Greek Isaiah is observable in the repetition, absent in the Hebrew, of the servant’s designation as “a covenant for the race” in 49:6.³⁰

³⁰ The identification of the servant with the nation is already a feature of the Hebrew text at 41:8; 44:1, 21; and 45:4; and the phrase “covenant for the people/race” was already present in the earlier oracle. If, as Peter Mallen has argued, Greek Isaiah exhibits a more nationalistic Jewish outlook vis-à-vis the nations, the translator’s modifications are nonetheless subtle and move within the line of thought laid out in the

What emerges from the Greek text of Isaiah is a robust parallel between Israel, who is gathered, restored, and ennobled before God, and the nations to whom God will extend light, justice, and salvation. The same parallel appears in Simeon's prophecy, which repeats the words of Isaiah (φῶς εἰς...ἔθνων) while adding, in imitation of biblical style, a parallel phrase that repackages the hope of the prophet (καὶ δόξαν λαοῦ σου Ἰσραήλ, 2:32). The explication of precisely how Jesus will embody the "glory of Israel" will require the rest of Luke's narrative, but the final word of Simeon's prophecy militates against the view that Jesus' light for the nations is predicated upon the rejection of Israel. Rather, the hope for Israel and for the nations is grounded in the scriptural calling of God's servant, and while these groups are distinguished, they are parallel rather than competitive recipients of God's mercy.

But even though there is no anti-Judaism to be found in the words of Simeon, the old man does not end on a joyful note. He speaks, perhaps privately to Mary, of the "rising and falling of many in Israel" and the disclosing of many secret thoughts, foreshadowing the division in Israel that is bound to come about through Jesus (2:34-35). His last words give a harrowing prediction of a sword piercing through the mother's soul. In view of the preceding imagery of division in Israel, a division that is worked

Hebrew text. See J. Ross Wagner, *Reading the Sealed Book: Old Greek Isaiah and the Problem of Septuagint Hermeneutics* (Waco, TX: Baylor Press, 2013), 232; Mallen, *Reading and Transformation*, 33.

out in the narrative that follows, this tragic image of psychic rupture may not be limited strictly to the maternal affections of the virgin mother, though that is its primary meaning. As the rejection of Jesus by his hometown will show, Mary is not the only one to whom her son belongs; he is part of a community. His rejection by this community will not only bring psychological suffering and social isolation to his mother; it will rupture the body politic with which she identifies (cf. 1:46-55).³¹

2.3 Jewish Identity in the Introductions to the Ministry of Jesus

If the introductory narratives in Lk 1-2 exhibit the themes of God's fidelity to Israel, of surprise and ensuing division over the nature of that fidelity, of repentance, and of the eschatological judgment and mercy of God upon both Israel and the gentiles, we must now ask how these themes are worked out in the gospel as a whole. It turns out that Luke has combined each of these elements in the opening scenes of the central section of the gospel.

³¹ This imagery of familial division at 12:49-53 is evocatively coordinated to the wide-ranging "fire" and "division" that Jesus has come to bring globally, "upon the earth."

2.3.1 The Ministry of John: Lk 3:1-18

The ministry of John the Baptist is introduced in 3:1-2 with a lengthy historical preamble surpassing those at 1:5 and 2:1-3, a fact that has prompted reflection on whether Luke's gospel originally began, as Mark's does, with the introduction of John as an adult.³² While reference to gentile and Jewish rulers might serve to introduce Luke's entire narrative, in the present context the prologue of 3:1-2a is focused narrowly upon the ministry of John and leads to the climactic statement that "The word of the God came to John" (3:2b). Though the context does not require it, this introduction underscores the epochal character of John's ministry, recalling the manner in which the word of the Lord came to the biblical prophets (e.g. 1Kgs 18:1, Jer 1:2, Ezek 1:3). The introduction thus subtly connects Luke's story with the biblical narrative of God's ongoing relation to Israel through the prophets (cf. 16:16).³³

John's ministry of preaching a baptism of repentance is briefly articulated in 3:3 and then expounded through Luke's lengthy citation of Is 40:3-5.³⁴ Luke alone among

³² As argued by Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 199-222.

³³ As Dahl observed, Luke wants to write "a continuation of biblical history" ("The Story of Abraham in Luke-Acts," in *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church*, 84.

³⁴ Luke's dependence at 3:4a upon Mk 1:1 explains this deviation from his general hesitance to cite scripture directly as the narrator. The other exception to this tendency is Lk 2:23, which is discussed above. Cf. Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 192-95.

the evangelists extends the citation to include the statement that “All flesh will see the salvation of God” (ὄψεται πᾶσα σὰρξ τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ).³⁵ Simeon’s oracle has already made clear that Jesus is to be understood as God’s salvation (τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:30), and the inclusion here of the phrase πᾶσα σὰρξ anticipates the scope of that salvation as including Jews and gentiles, even though John’s ministry is limited to Israel (cf. Acts 13:24). In Is 40:1-5, the call to “prepare the way of the Lord” is an announcement of mercy upon the exilic captives who return to the land in eschatological glory. Yet Isaiah’s motif of consolation is absent in Luke. Instead of offering comfort to an Israel wearied by sins, John proclaims “a baptism of repentance” (3:3), and his “good news” (εὐηγγελίζετο, 3:18) is one of exhortation and confrontation.³⁶ While Isaiah spoke “tenderly to the heart of Jerusalem,” John calls his congregation a “brood of vipers” and warns them of God’s coming wrath (3:7). This reversal of Isaiah’s tone is surprising, but it is a deliberate element of Luke’s portrayal of John (cf. Acts 13:24). John’s ministry thus anticipates a major theme that will characterize the ministry of

³⁵ The phrase τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ is of special significance in the Greek version of Isaiah; see David Smith “A Spectacular Salvation: Selected Greek Modifications of Hebrew Isaiah and their Reception in Luke-Acts,” unpublished paper presented at the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies Annual Meeting, 2017.

³⁶ Luke utilizes at 3:18 the term παρακαλῶν, a term repeated in the Greek text of his Isaiah passage with some frequency and generally translated as “comfort” (see Is 40:1-2; cf. Is 61:2). However, the context of Lk 3 suggests that “exhortation” is a better summary of John’s preaching (so the NRSV).

Jesus: God is faithful to Israel, but Israel is now being called to repentance. Though Luke does not specify the relation of “all flesh” (3:6) to the gentile mission, it is nevertheless anticipated.

2.3.2 The Baptism, Genealogy, and Temptation of Jesus: Lk 3:21-4:15

Like Mark, Luke follows the preaching of John with Jesus’ baptism and temptation (Lk 3:21-22; 4:1-3; cf. Mk 1:9-13). Since, in this arrangement, both of these episodes present the identity and mission of Jesus as God’s son (Lk 3:22, 4:9; Mk 1:11), it is appropriate that Luke has inserted between them his special genealogy, which culminates in the statement that Jesus, as son of Adam, is the son of God (Lk 3:38; cf. 1:35).³⁷ According to this arrangement, the identity of Jesus is announced in his baptism; his heritage within Israelite and biblical history is traced through his genealogy; and the specific character of that identity is challenged through the temptation by Satan. Following these events, a brief but characteristically Lukan summary statement in Lk 4:14-15 provides the first report of Jesus’ ministry in Galilee and his reception there:

³⁷ Although the culmination of the Lukan genealogy with Adam as the son of God reveals Luke’s concern with human (and not simply Israelite) history, it remains the case that Adam is a character from *Jewish* scripture in tradition. If Luke is tracing the history of humanity from Adam to Jesus, it an *Israelite* telling of that history, within which the story of Adam and his progeny functions as part of a story of Israelite origins

“And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and the report spread throughout all the region around him, and he was teaching in their synagogues, being praised by all.”³⁸ The parallels at Mk 1:14 and Mt 4:17 are notably different, for there Jesus takes up the message of John, calling for repentance in view of the imminence of the kingdom. Luke, however, simply reports that “Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee” and “taught in their synagogues.” According to Conzelmann, Luke’s obfuscation of the parallel between Jesus and John reflects his concern to differentiate their ministries within his salvation-historical framework.³⁹ It is clear from the rest of Luke’s gospel that Jesus, like John, is both preaching (4:43-44) and calling for repentance (5:32, 13:3,5), but there is indeed an important difference in tone between Jesus and John. Whereas John confronts the people with a prophetic and threatening call to renewal, Jesus is presented as a teacher. This may not be *all* Jesus is doing at this point,⁴⁰ but teaching is how Luke chooses to first relay Jesus’ activity. We will not, therefore, be surprised to find him doing precisely this in 4:16-30 (esp. vv.20-22, in which, after reading, he sits down to instruct an attentive congregation). Whereas the response to

³⁸ Luke frequently adds summaries of the response of the people to Jesus to his sources, providing thereby a measure of narrative polish and focus. See Lk 1:63b, 65, 2:18, 3:15, 5:9, 26, 7:17, 9:43, 18:43.

³⁹ *Theology of St. Luke*, 29-31.

⁴⁰ Luke probably expects his reader to understand Jesus’ reputation at 4:23 to include miraculous deeds, which may be implied in Jesus’ proceeding ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος.

Jesus in Nazareth will become hostile, prior to that encounter Luke presents the positive response of a much larger Galilean multitude. In 4:14 Jesus' entrance into Galilee in the power of the Spirit prompts the spreading of his fame to the surrounding region, while the statement in 4:15 that he taught in their synagogues is followed by the result that "he was being praised by all." This brief double summary provides a picture of Jesus' *positive* reception in Galilee, to which the rejection in Nazareth is an important contrast.

2.3.4 The Preaching at Nazareth: Lk 4:16-30

It is universally recognized that the scene at the Nazareth synagogue has a special importance in Luke-Acts. In this scene Luke brings forward key elements of his narrative of Jesus' ministry with a clarity and density that has led many scholars to describe this scene as Luke's "programmatic" theological shaping of the tradition.⁴¹ For Fitzmyer, "The Lucan story...has a definite programmatic character...Luke has

⁴¹ The episode itself is brought forward from Mk 6:1-6. Luke's dependence upon the Markan story of the rejection at Nazareth is clear from his dependence upon Markan order in this phase of the Galilean ministry. The progression in Mk 4:1-6:46 proceeds thus: the parable of the sower, the calming of the sea, the exorcism in the country of the Gerasenes, the resurrection of the daughter of the synagogue official, the reception at Nazareth, the sending of the twelve, the account of John's beheading, and the feeding of the multitude. This progression is followed exactly by Lk 8:4-9:17, with the single exception of the visit to Nazareth, which Luke has given special significance by placing it at the beginning of the Galilean ministry.

deliberately put this story at the beginning of the public ministry to encapsulate the entire ministry of Jesus and the reaction to it."⁴² It is worth asking, however, whether this story is programmatic in every respect. The sequence of a positive response among the people followed by hostility is certainly important to Luke, for it is broadly representative of the structure of the gospel and of Acts. Yet across the narrative of each volume the response is more complex. The gospel does not actually end with the people's rejection of Jesus before Pilate (23:13-23); rather, this rejection is followed by displays of contrition (23:48) and intimations of repentance (24:47). Likewise, the early chapters of Acts contain a good deal of rejection (Acts 2:13; 4:3, 21; 5:17, 40; 6:12-7:60) along with the positive favor of the people (Acts 2:47), while the failure of Paul's mission to the Jews is matched with substantial success (Acts 13:43, 14:1, 17:4, 11, 28:24a). By the time Paul arrives at his final visit in Jerusalem, there are thousands of Jewish Christians who, though they are misinformed about and suspicious of Paul, are nevertheless identified as "believers among the Jews" (ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τῶν πεπιστευκότων, Acts 21:20). As the complexity of the Jewish response to Jesus is a thoroughgoing feature of Luke's narrative, the Nazareth scene is hardly adequate to anticipate the whole of that narrative. Even if the motif of opposition and rejection is the dominant element in

⁴² Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:529.

Luke's portrayal of Jewish response, the prior summary statements of Jesus' welcome in Galilee press against reducing Luke's portrait to one of univocal rejection.

Though it does not express the entirety of Luke's story of Jesus and Israel, the Nazareth episode does anticipate the key elements of Jesus' identity and ministry. In this scene scripture is cited at length to explicate Jesus' calling to proclaim good news as God's anointed prophet who will inevitably meet a violent death (4:24, cf. 13:33-34). This rejection is not determinative, for Jesus escapes, prefiguring his resurrection through his strange ability to "pass through" the crowds who seem bent on hurling him off a cliff (4:30; cf. Acts 2:24). The passage likewise anticipates God's mercy to gentiles, and this expansive mercy is connected to the anticipated rejection of Jesus by his people, despite his presence among them as one announcing the year of God's favor. Since the basic themes we have identified from Luke's introductory chapters are present, the passage merits careful consideration.

Central to this episode is the reading and interpretation of Isaiah 61:1-2a/58:6, from which Jesus articulates his commission as God's anointed prophet:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he has anointed me
to preach the gospel to the poor.
He has sent me

to proclaim to the prisoners release (ἀφῆσιν),
and to the blind, recovery of sight,
to send the oppressed away in freedom (ἐν ἀφῆσει) [cf. Is 58:6],
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. (Lk 4:18-19 // Is 61:1-2)

Luke places this text in a carefully structured scene of scriptural exposition. As Jesus stands to read, receives the book, opens and reads, returns the book, and sits down with “all the eyes in the synagogue fixed on him,” Luke creates a dramatic expectation, in which the emphasis falls doubly upon the text from Isaiah and Jesus’ statement in v.21 that “this scripture is fulfilled today in your hearing.”⁴³ In keeping with the poetic mode of expressing Israel’s eschatological hopes that we observed in the canticles, Luke does not here explicate the nature of this fulfillment. Rather, he retains the poetic and somewhat vague imagery of the scriptures: the poor will hear the good news, the oppressed captives will be freed, the blind will receive sight, and the Lord’s favor will be proclaimed (v.21). In this way the theme of God’s fidelity to Israel—the scene, after all, takes place in a synagogue—is evoked, even as the specific character of that fulfillment and its implications are left open-ended. We are thus presented, again, with the statement, now on the lips of Jesus, that God is presently fulfilling the prophetic

⁴³ See Jeffrey S. Siker, ““First to the Gentiles”: A Literary Analysis of Luke 4:16-30.” *JBL* 111/1 (1992): 73-90.

promises made to Israel (cf. 1:54-55, 72-73). A critical consideration of the character of the response of the congregation to this message requires a detailed comparison of the passage with the Markan source text.

Table 1. The Rejection at Nazareth

Mark 6:1-6	Luke 4:16-30
<p>¹ Καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκεῖθεν καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τὴν πατρίδα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀκολουθοῦσιν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.</p> <p>² καὶ γενομένου σαββάτου ἤρξατο διδάσκειν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ,</p> <p>καὶ πολλοὶ ἀκούοντες ἐξεπλήσσοντο λέγοντες· πῶθεν τούτω ταῦτα, καὶ τίς ἢ σοφία ἢ δοθεῖσα τούτω,</p> <p>καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις τοιαῦται διὰ τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ γινόμεναι;</p> <p>³ οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τέκτων, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς Μαρίας καὶ ἀδελφὸς Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωσήφου καὶ Ἰούδα καὶ Σίμωνος; καὶ οὐκ εἰσὶν αἱ ἀδελφαὶ αὐτοῦ ὧδε πρὸς ἡμᾶς;</p> <p>καὶ ἐσκανδαλίζοντο ἐν αὐτῷ.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[cf. Mk 1:21-34]</p> <p>⁴ καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς συγγενεῦσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ.</p> <p>⁵ καὶ οὐκ ἐδύνατο ἐκεῖ ποιῆσαι οὐδεμίαν δύναμιν, εἰ μὴ ὀλίγοις ἀρρώστοις ἐπιθεῖς τὰς χεῖρας ἐθεράπευσεν. ⁶ καὶ ἐθαύμαζεν διὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν. Καὶ περιῆγεν τὰς κώμας κύκλῳ διδάσκων.</p>	<p>¹⁶ Καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς Ναζαρά, οὗ ἦν τεθραμμένος,</p> <p>καὶ εἰσῆλθεν κατὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν καὶ ἀνέστη ἀναγνῶναι.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">vv. 17-21 (The Reading of Isaiah)</p> <p>²² Καὶ πάντες ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐθαύμαζον ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος τοῖς ἐκπορευομένοις ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ</p> <p>καὶ ἔλεγον· οὐχὶ υἱὸς ἐστὶν Ἰωσήφ οὗτος;</p> <p>²³ καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς· πάντως ἐρεῖτέ μοι τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· ἰατρέ, θεράπευσον σεαυτόν· ὅσα ἠκούσαμεν γενόμενα εἰς τὴν Καφαρναοὺμ ποιήσον καὶ ὧδε ἐν τῇ πατρίδι σου.</p> <p>²⁴ εἶπεν δέ· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">vv. 25-27 (The Examples of Elijah and Elisha)</p> <p>²⁸ καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες θυμοῦ ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ ἀκούοντες ταῦτα ²⁹ καὶ ἀναστάντες ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἤγαγον αὐτὸν ἕως ὄφρουτος τοῦ ὄρους ἐφ' οὗ ἡ πόλις ὑκοδόμητο αὐτῶν ὥστε κατακρημνίσαι αὐτόν·</p> <p style="text-align: center;">cf. v.23b (ποιήσον καὶ ὧδε)</p> <p>³⁰ αὐτὸς δὲ διελθὼν διὰ μέσου αὐτῶν ἐπορεύετο.</p>

This comparison reveals both a close correspondence and obvious differences. Nearly every element of the Markan account is represented in Luke's version, though seldom with verbatim agreement. In addition to the addition of the reading of Isaiah in Lk 4:17-21, Luke's retelling of the Markan story substantially recasts the character and rationale of the synagogue's response to Jesus.⁴⁴

In Mark's story, the congregation's marveling at Jesus' wisdom and power is combined with a reflection on his parochial status, leading to the summary statement about the congregation's offense.⁴⁵ This hostile response is then the impetus for Jesus' invocation of the proverb about the rejection of a prophet, his inability to do any deed of power there, and his marveling (ἐθαύμαζεν) at their unbelief (Mk 6:4-6).⁴⁶ Although the

⁴⁴ Notably omitted in Luke is the Markan congregation's exclamation regarding Jesus' deeds of power (αἱ δυνάμεις τοιαῦται..., Mk 6:2). In Luke, Jesus does no works of power in Nazareth at all (cf. the unanswered request in 4:23), and the entire episode is about Jesus' teaching and the various responses to it.

⁴⁵ On the episode in Mark, see Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* AB 27 (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 374-79; cf. C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, CGTC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 193-5. Both Cranfield and Marcus observe that the matronymic designation of Jesus as the "son of Mary" (rather than the normal patronymic "son of Joseph" as in Lk 4:22) is derogatory and suggestive of illegitimacy.

⁴⁶ The Markan scene is essentially repeated in Mt 13:54-58, with only slight modification. Mt 13:55 modifies Mk 6:3 to read οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός. It may be that an awareness of the Matthean version of the question lies behind the Lukan form in Lk 6:22 (οὐχὶ υἱός ἐστιν Ἰωσήφ οὗτος;).

response to Jesus leads to the summary statement of offense (6:3), what precedes this summary is more complex. The synagogue congregation is initially astounded and exclaims, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands!” (Mk 6:2). If these exclamations stood on their own, they could be read in a genuinely positive light. In context, however, they contribute the first of two elements in the attitude that leads to rejection: Jesus appears among them as a powerful sage and teacher, but the sheer unlikelihood of the report that has come to Nazareth (cf. Mk 1:28), together with Jesus’ humble pedigree, shows him up for what he really is—a common tradesman, no more significant than his brothers and sisters, pretending to an ill-gotten and therefore dubious greatness (thus 6:2, *πόθεν τούτω ταῦτα*). Although Mark’s readers have been made to understand Jesus’ wisdom and power, the elements of Jesus’ ministry that should make for a positive reception of Jesus at Nazareth redound to an entirely negative response: “Thus they took offense at him.”⁴⁷

In comparison with the Markan text, the Lukan summary of the congregation’s initial response to Jesus stands out as unambiguously positive, so that scholars typically

⁴⁷ For Marcus, the apparently incompatible combination of wonder and hostility in the crowd suggests that they may be under a demonic influence (*Mark*, 1:374-79).

speak of two phases in the response to Jesus at Nazareth in Luke.⁴⁸ The initially positive response is apparent in the statement that, “All bore him witness and marveled at the gracious words coming out of his mouth” (v.22a).⁴⁹ This initial response appears warm and receptive—a welcoming of the promises of Isaiah that are being fulfilled in their hearing. The question about Jesus’ family that immediately follows (“Is this not Joseph’s son?” 4:22b) is thus in Luke an expression of wonder that such gracious words could come from a hometown boy. Whereas the Markan Jesus marvels at the congregation’s unbelief (ἐθαύμαζεν, Mk 6:6), it is the congregation in Luke that marvels at Jesus in apparent appreciation (ἐθαύμαζον, Lk 4:22). In his redaction of Mark, Luke thus presents a more positive initial reception of Jesus in Nazareth than does his source, even as he prepares for a more starkly negative turn. The congregation’s surprisingly

⁴⁸ This is the major question raised by David Hill, who summarizes various attempts to explain this difficulty, “The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth (Lk iv 16-30),” *NovT* 13 no3 (1971): 161-80. Hill.

⁴⁹ J. Jeremias has argued that πάντες ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ should be read in a negative light as bearing witness *against* Jesus (Jeremias, *Jesus’ Promise to the Nations*, SBT 24 [Naperville: Allenson, 1958] 44-46). It is true that the designation of Jesus’ teaching as λόγοις τῆς χάριτος is the statement of the narrator and not the congregation, and so it is possible that the narrator’s summary at 4:22 contains a stark irony. But the combination of the testimony with the statement that they all marveled (ἐθαύμαζον), combined with Luke’s omission of Mark’s statement (καὶ ἐσκανδαλίζοντο ἐν αὐτῷ), suggests that the initial response to Jesus should be read as positive—a drawing out of what was already implicit in the Markan text (so Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:534).

murderous turn of heart is an interpretive crux of this passage and is a matter that bears directly on the question of Luke's portrayal of the response to Jesus among his contemporaries and among those Jews whose later response to the Christian gospel the rejection at Nazareth anticipates.

In Luke, the congregation's "seemingly inexplicable *volte-face*"⁵⁰ against Jesus is a response not to his parochial identity but to Jesus' teaching, in which, despite an initially positive reception, Jesus seems to pick a fight with the congregation. His provocation begins with a contrast between Capernaum, where Jesus healed many people (cf. Lk 4:31-41), and Jesus' hometown of Nazareth, where the congregation purportedly expects the same display of power. The parable, "Physician, heal yourself!" which Jesus places in the mouth of the congregation, sets up his response: "A prophet is not acceptable in his hometown" (4:23-24). This clash of apothegms is explicated by a midrashic appeal to the biblical stories of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, who, in the examples Jesus cites, bring miraculous blessings to gentiles rather than Israelites (vv.25-27).⁵¹ The citation of this chapter of Israel's history as a lens for interpreting Jesus' ministry and its recipients

⁵⁰ Hill, "Rejection of Jesus," 166. For Marcus, this inexplicability is a feature already of the congregation's response in Mark; see Marcus, *Mark*, 1:374-79.

⁵¹ For a justification of viewing Luke's use of scripture as an example of midrash, see Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, "The Gospels and Midrash: An Introduction to Luke and Scripture," in *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke-Acts* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1993), 1-13.

produces an extreme, murderous response from the synagogue (ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες θυμοῦ, v.28), from which Jesus makes a near escape. This, then, is the shape of the distinctively Lukan account of Jesus reception at Nazareth. How shall we account for it?

The first clue is the distinctly Lukan reference to Capernaum. The demand to “do here in your hometown what we have heard you did in Capernaum” introduces a clear and obvious anachronism. Although in Mark the Nazareth pericope follows Jesus’ ministry in Capernaum (Mk 1:21-34), Luke’s dislocation of the Nazareth episode from its Markan context means that the Lukan Jesus will not visit Capernaum until *after* this episode (Lk 4:31-41). While Luke’s relocation of the episode is frequently observed, less attention has been given to Luke’s active role in creating and marking this awkwardness.⁵² There is no reference to Capernaum in the either Mk 6:1-6 or Mt 13:54-58, nor does either of these other gospels juxtapose the visits of Jesus to Nazareth and Capernaum. Luke alone draws a contrast between the two cities by introducing a textual “ungrammaticality” that was observable, in all likelihood, even to Luke’s ancient readers.⁵³ This ungrammaticality, through its awkwardness, points to Luke’s deliberate

⁵² See Hill, “Rejection,” 161-2; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:534.

⁵³ Building on the work of Michael Riffaterre, Daniel Boyarin explains an ungrammaticality as “the awkwardness of a textual moment, at any linguistic of discourse level, which by its awkwardness points semiotically to another text which provides a key to its decoding” (Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* [Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994], 57). See Riffaterre, *The Semiotics of Poetry*

rewriting of this passage for his own purpose. We should therefore not be surprised if he introduces other themes into this episode that create further disjunctions. In fact, that is precisely what we find.

Initially, in v.23, Jesus anticipates the congregation's request for a demonstration of his power such as was displayed in Capernaum. Jesus rejects this request with the statement that a prophet is not acceptable in his hometown. From this it would appear that the intended rationale for the congregation's disappointment is the failure of Jesus to "do here in your hometown" what was done in Capernaum. That is, the issue is whether or not Jesus will work miracles in Nazareth like he did in Capernaum, in demonstration of fidelity to his true πατρις. If, following the proverb about the unacceptable prophet, we were to read that the congregation was, at that point, filled with rage, the rationale for the rage would be clear—Jesus would be refusing to identify with the people of Nazareth, adopting instead the status of outsider. The meaning would be essentially that of the Markan and Matthean accounts. But that is not what Luke has done. Instead, he has inserted a discourse on the ministries of Elijah and Elisha. Unlike Jesus, these prophets were not simply called to minister to Jews outside the town of their upbringing. They were called to bless *gentiles*, despite the existence in

(Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1978). I suggest that the other "text" evoked in Lk 4:16-30 is the experience of conflict over gentile status within the church of Luke's day.

their day of many needy “in Israel” (twice in 4:25, 27). Although a duality of insider vs. outsider is present both in the contrast between Nazareth and Capernaum in 4:23 and in that between gentiles and Israelites in 4:25-27, the two dualities are not equivalent. In Luke’s summary of the Galilean ministry (4:15), in the episode at Nazareth (4:16, esp. 4:21), and immediately afterwards in Capernaum (Lk 4:31, 33), Jesus consistently ministers to Jews in Jewish synagogues. Therefore, the introduction in a discourse about Nazareth and Capernaum of the Jew/gentile duality, which is foreign to the immediate context, constitutes another conceptual disjunction. Luke has inserted a theme that does not properly belong at this point in his story.

To this disjunction belongs another, namely the attempted murder of Jesus at the beginning of his ministry. No other extant passage in the New Testament attests such an early attempt on Jesus’ life, an attempt grounded in his teaching.⁵⁴ These two themes are related, for the sending of God’s prophets to the gentiles implies an apparent *departure* from those in Israel, and *this* becomes the reason for which the synagogue at Nazareth expels Jesus (who then immediately proceeds to the synagogue at Capernaum). Together, the presence of these *later* motifs suggests that the entirety of 4:25-30

⁵⁴ Mk 3:6 (parallel to Lk 6:11) is the earliest instance of conspiracy. The statement in John 5:18 is the closest parallel to Lk 4:29.

foreshadows the themes of Jewish rejection and gentile mission that are otherwise unattested in this section of Luke's narrative.⁵⁵

This Lukan transformation of the Markan narrative appears remarkably similar to the Lukan portrait of the ministry of Paul, who on numerous occasions denounces the synagogue members who reject his message and announces his intention to go to the gentiles, only to proceed directly to the synagogue in the next town (cf. Acts 13:46-14:1; 17:1-10). This overt literary parallel between Jesus and Paul raises the question of how Luke intended the rejection of both characters to function.

Most interpreters recognize that Jesus' references to gentiles in the stories of Elijah and Elisha anticipate the inclusion of gentiles among the recipients of God's prophetic blessings in the life of the church, a theme that is foreign both to Luke's source for this passage (Mk 6:1-6) and to the immediate context of Jesus' ministry in Luke's Gospel.⁵⁶ This conclusion leads us to postulate that in Lk 4:16-30, esp. vv.23-30, the

⁵⁵ This judgment that the scene isn't really about the Nazareth event as much as what that event signifies is confirmed by the fact that Luke nowhere else reflects on this vivid scene of rejection, nor are his characters aware of it. The disciples do not understand at Lk 9:45 that Jesus might fall into human hands. In the woes against the Galilean cities at Lk 10:13-15 Capernaum is included, but there is no mention of Nazareth.

⁵⁶ So Siker, "Literary Analysis," 74-5; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:529, 537; Carroll, *Luke*, 116. On the other hand, the introduction of the theme of gentile inclusion resonates with Luke's earlier allusion to the $\varphi\tilde{\omega}\varsigma$ εἰς

author is introducing concerns of a later time. Within this scene, the synagogue at Nazareth is figured as negatively disposed toward the idea that the advent of the Christ (or at least of a prophet of God) is an event in which the prophetic inversions promised in Isaiah and in the Lukan canticles are applied to gentiles, perhaps to the exclusion of at least some Israelites. Accordingly, scholars frequently refer to the ethnocentric outlook of the Nazareth synagogue attenders.⁵⁷ If Luke intended his readers to understand the Nazareth congregation as representative of Jews and Jewish response to Jesus generally, then the scene could be Luke's generalized critique of what he regarded as a parochial hostility toward gentiles.⁵⁸

However, it is doubtful that Luke intends the congregation to represent Jews or the Jewish response to Jesus generally. As Gerhard Lohfink has argued convincingly, Luke portrays Jesus encountering the people as a whole in the course of his ministry,⁵⁹ and the response among them is more complex than that in the Nazareth episode alone.

ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν in Lk 2:32. It is no accident that Simeon's prophecy, like Lk 4:16-30, involves another clear reference to Isaiah (cf. Is 42:6, 49:6).

⁵⁷ Hill speaks of "the parochially minded Jews of Nazareth" ("Rejection," 169).

⁵⁸ Kuecker finds that the "Israelite ethnic identity" at Nazareth involves a desire "to privilege [an Israelite] subgroup while restricting the extension of benefits to the 'other'" (*The Spirit and the Other*, 83, 95).

⁵⁹ Lohfink, *Sammlung Israels: Eine Untersuchung zur lukanischen Ekklesiologie*, SZANT 39 (München: Kösel Verlag, 1975), 33-62.

Luke's redaction of the Markan story of Jesus' reception in Nazareth is, moreover, structured around the saying Luke knows from Mark about the rejection of the prophet in his hometown.⁶⁰ These sayings have more to do with Jesus and the fact of his rejection by those close to him than they do with the identity of those who reject him.⁶¹ Moreover, if Jesus' reference to the gentile mission and the hostility it provokes anticipates events *later* in the narrative of Acts—events closer in time to Luke's own writing and to the time of his first readers—then it is likely that the Nazarenes' rejection of Jesus and his pro-gentile message corresponds most directly to opposition to gentile-inclusive Christianity. The gentiles who were blessed in the stories of Elijah and Elisha in 4:25-27 likely refer to those gentiles blessed by the advent of the Jewish messiah—i.e. gentile Christians. The violent rejection of Jesus' teaching should be seen as arising most immediately not from a generically ethnocentric Judaism but rather from a specific hostility toward either *gentile Christians* or to those Jewish Christians who welcomed

⁶⁰ The closest verbal correspondences between the two accounts are thus the saying of Jesus about the rejected prophet and the congregation's words about Jesus' parentage. It appears that these sayings about the anomaly of the hometown prophet were key elements of the tradition that, along with his own experience and theology, guided Luke as he rewrote the Markan story.

⁶¹ The rejection of Jesus by those who ought to have received him was in all likelihood part of the early kerygmatic summaries in the church; see, e.g., Jn 1:11; Mk 12:10; 1Pet 2:7.

them—the same kind of Christians against whom non-Christian Jews in the latter half of Acts are repeatedly hostile.

If the interchange between Jesus and the Nazareth synagogue resonates with the tensions of a later time over the status of gentile Christians, who are the actors signified in this later conflict? It is clear from elsewhere in Luke's writings that he views the actions of the later church as co-involved with the actions of the resurrected Jesus—that Jesus continues to be alive and operative within the life of the church.⁶² If Jesus and his biblical interpretation represents, at this point, the later apostles and their kerygma, which body does the now-marveling, now-rioting synagogue evoke? To answer this question requires reflecting briefly on Luke's portrayal of opposition to the gentile mission in Acts.

In Luke's story of the gentile mission, opposition to gentile inclusion in the church first comes from Peter, the heart of the Jewish Christian movement, who initially regarded it "improper for a Jew to associate or visit a foreigner" (Acts 10:28). The desire to maintain a religiously significant social distance between Jew and gentile, which Luke's Peter here articulates as a matter of principle, is symbolically present in the

⁶² Thus Acts 1:1 refers to the earlier gospel as the record of what Jesus "began to do and teach," implying that Jesus will continue as an active character in the story of the church (Acts 16:7, 20:24, 22:18). When Saul is persecuting the Christians, it is really Jesus he is persecuting (so Acts 9:4, cf. 26:9), and when Peter heals Aeneas, it is Jesus Christ who is at work (9:34).

charge leveled against Paul in Jerusalem, that Paul “has brought Greeks into the temple and defiled this holy place” (Acts 21:28). Luke makes clear that this has not actually occurred, but that Trophimus the Ephesian companion of Paul was only present with Paul in the city (21:29). This opposition to Paul’s association with gentiles is thus based on misunderstanding. So is the Jewish Christian rumor, according to which Paul is thought to teach Jews living among gentiles to abandon circumcision and the Torah, thus removing the customary way of life that symbolically demarcates Jews from gentiles (Acts 21:20-21). The reader of Acts learns that Paul is innocent of such charges (Acts 16:3; 21:22-24), but Luke’s portrayal of Peter’s hesitation to interact with gentiles and opposition to Paul shows the degree to which Luke is sensitive to the challenge the gentile mission faced from Jewish Christian objections. The concern of Lukan Jewish Christians to preserve the Jew/gentile distinction is present in a slightly different form in the insistence of Christian Pharisees in Acts 15:5 that pagan converts keep Torah and the covenant of circumcision, thereby effectively becoming Jewish proselytes. As the letter from the Jerusalem church indicates, a distinction between Christian Jews and gentiles *does* remain in Luke’s thought, for gentile Christians are not obligated to keep circumcision or the entire Torah, while Paul the Jew remains faithful to both. But this duality of praxis does not coincide with a duality of community insider/outsider, as it does in the initial view of Peter and the position of the Christian Pharisees. Instead, Luke presents the gentile mission as resulting in two forms of praxis for Jews and

gentiles within the single Christian community.⁶³ According to Luke, this vision was controversial among various Jewish Christians who were confused about the nature of the gentile mission in general and Paul's ministry in particular.

If Jesus' reference to gentiles and the hostility this reference provokes in Nazareth adumbrates this later controversy over the gentile mission as expressed in Acts, the opposition from the congregation would appear to anticipate objections of Jewish Christians. When the Nazareth episode is read in this light, the initial welcome of Jesus and his message of fulfillment in 4:22 becomes intelligible, for these Jewish Christians are not simply hostile toward Jesus but toward the gentile mission hinted at in his teaching. The double response of the synagogue (marveling at Jesus' teaching in 4:21-22, hostile to that teaching in 4:23-30) thus comprehends both aspects of the position of Lukan Jewish Christians: admiration for Jesus but resistance to the welcome extended to gentiles in his name. If Luke was in contact with a Jewish Christian community that embodied this position, its resistance to the gentile mission was likely galvanized by the success of that mission. As the influx of gentile converts rapidly expanded the gentile constituency of the diaspora churches, their increasingly marginalized Jewish Christians constituency may well have complained, "Physician, heal yourself!" That is, it may have prayed to Christ, in angst over the rejection of the gospel by many Jews, "Let your

⁶³ So, Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*, 141.

ministry be directed to those who have the most natural claim upon you—the Jewish people.”

Such Jewish Christian angst over the disproportionate success of the early Christian mission among gentiles is not unknown. Paul himself, the most prominent champion of the early gentile mission, writes of his consternation at the meager success of the mission to the Jews (Rom 9:1-5).⁶⁴ The frustration with the ethnic imbalance between Jews and gentiles in the church is likewise expressed by a second-century Jewish Christian writer who, though disposed favorably toward the gentile mission, nevertheless portrays Paul as a wolf who pillaged the Jewish people to enrich the gentile church, “trampling upon Israel with salvation” (*T. Benj.* 11:2-5).⁶⁵ Such violent imagery within Jewish Christian imagination warrants the historical supposition that there were

⁶⁴ His consolation is found not in pitting Jewish and gentile Christian missions against one another but in perceiving in the disparate success of two missions a mysterious plan of God for Israel’s eventual salvation (so Rom 11:25-32). So C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 2:577; J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans*, NovTSupp 101 (Boston: Brill, 2000), 276-285.

⁶⁵ On the Jewish Christian provenance of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, see Joel Marcus, “*The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Didascalia Apostolorum: A Common Jewish Christian Milieu?*” *JTS* 61 (2010): 596-626. On opposition to Paul’s gentile mission among early Jewish Christians, see Gerd Lüdemann, *Opposition to Paul in Jewish Christianity*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989).

some in Israel who felt trampled upon and robbed by the victory Paul won among the gentiles. In view of this historical likelihood, the saying the Lukan Jesus attributes to the congregation in Nazareth may carry overtones of such disappointment among Jewish Christians. Luke's distinctive crafting of the story of the conflict between Jesus and Nazareth may thus reflect the conflicts of the early church, which included intra-Christian tensions over where and to whom Jesus' ministry was primarily to be directed.⁶⁶

However, we cannot neatly divide Jewish Christianity from non-Christian Judaism on the matter of hostility to the inclusion of gentiles in the Jewish church. It is non-Christian "Jews from Asia" who instigate a riot against Paul in Acts 21:27 over the matter of introducing gentiles into the temple, and in the Diaspora the successful preaching of Paul to gentiles incites jealousy and hostility among non-Christian Jews (so Acts 13:45). Luke thus portrays both Jewish Christians and non-Christian Jews as hostile to Paul's ministry on the grounds of Paul's relations with gentiles. The historical Paul himself remained within the community of the synagogue and under its discipline (cf. 2Cor 11:24) and thus sustained relationships with non-Christian Jews even as he

⁶⁶ Understood in this way, the prayer of the Nazareth congregation recalls earlier hopes "for the consolation of Israel" (2:25) and "the redemption of Jerusalem" (2:38) and foreshadows the question of the apostles about when the kingdom will be restored to Israel (Acts 1:6).

preached predominantly to gentiles.⁶⁷ We should thus avoid imagining clear-cut distinctions between how Jewish Christians and non-Christian Jews felt about the growth of a gentile inclusive Christianity, since in the earliest period these two groups were not disassociated.⁶⁸ Instead, it is likely that Christians who were closely connected to the community of the synagogue were influenced by the concerns of those in the synagogue who did not accept their views about Jesus—and vice versa.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ For a consideration of Paul's marginal status within Judaism, compare Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997) with the important article by John Barclay, "Paul Among Diaspora Jews: Anomaly or Apostate?" *JSNT* 60 (1995): 89-120.

⁶⁸ Here we must face the question of whether there was, at the time of Luke's writing, a movement to expel Jewish Christians from synagogues (cf. Jn 9:22). I am inclined to regard this as a matter on which the diaspora synagogues were divided, for Luke's Roman Jews know of no organized hostility towards the church (Acts 28:21). On the other hand, the hostility Paul meets in Diaspora synagogues, together with Jesus' statement in Lk 6:22 ("when they exclude you"), suggests that there may have been some Jews, like the pre-Christian Paul, who sought to expel Jewish Christians from the synagogue.

⁶⁹ The complexity of such intra-Jewish relations in relation to the status gentile Christians converts may be observed in the debates over gentile status in Galatia. See J. Louis Martyn, "A Law Observant Mission to Gentiles," in *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 7-24; Mark D. Nanos, "The Inter- and Intra-Jewish Political Context of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," in *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation*, ed. Mark D. Nanos (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2002), 396-407.

If the complaint “Physician, heal yourself!” carries overtones of the concern that the salvation of God has been sent to the gentiles (cf. Acts 28:28), whether among Jews who believe in Jesus or Jews who do not, the response of Jesus is intelligible as a response to that complaint; the scriptures of Israel themselves contain the stories of prophets sent to bless those outside the bounds of Israel. Such an interpretation of Israel’s redemption would have been controversial within the diverse landscape of Second Temple Jewish thought, and it is not surprising that it was not accepted by many Jews.⁷⁰ But *surprise*, as is increasingly being recognized among biblical scholars, is a particularly important aspect of early Christian hermeneutical reflection upon the scriptures of Israel. The conviction that the scriptures speak about Jesus—his birth, death, resurrection, and exaltation—is part of the *kerygma* of the church that encounters the resurrected Jesus in its communal life. It is not a hermeneutical conviction that prompts faith in Jesus; it is an effect of that faith, with which early Christians *then* began

⁷⁰ While there is some evidence from the Sibylline Oracles that Israel’s restoration could be conceived as an event that coincided with gentile sovereignty, most Second Temple Jewish hopes involved Jewish domination over gentiles. See Michael E. Fuller, *The Restoration of Israel: Israel’s Re-gathering and the Fate of the Nations in Early Jewish Literature and Luke-Acts* BZNTW 138 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 13-196.

to understand the otherwise enigmatic scriptures in a fresh christological light.⁷¹ Thus it is that the resurrected Jesus must still explain to the apostles, even as they behold him alive again, what they could not understand before Jesus “opened their mind to understand the scriptures” (Lk 24:25): the scriptures speak “about me” (24:44). Jesus’ surprising teaching on the import of the Elijah and Elisha narratives could thus function plausibly as a response to the convergence of two simultaneous realities: the prominence of gentiles in the early church and the resistance of many Jews to the apostolic message. If Jewish Christians and their non-Christian Jewish brethren worried that an increasingly gentile-populated Christianity now called into question God’s fidelity to Israel, Jesus’ response indicates that this surprising, uncomfortable, and perhaps temporary circumstance (cf. Lk 21:24) had biblical precedents.

⁷¹ For C.H. Dodd, the development of christology was a process grounded in reflection upon the convergence of scriptural prophesies. See *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1957). However, early Christians seem to have approached the scriptures with the a priori certainty that they spoke about Jesus, a certainty that provided the starting point, rather than the conclusion of their exegesis. See the conclusions to this effect in Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 202-3. Richard Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Four-Fold Gospel Witness* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014).

If the discussion in 4:21-27 is as *hermeneutical* as I have posited, the violent response to Jesus in 4:29-30 is understandable as a response to the pressure exerted upon the congregation by Jesus' provocative interpretation. The days of Elijah and Elisha were dark days in Israel's history. These prophets ministered during the period of the divided kingdom during the long reign of Ahaz and Jezebel who persecuted the prophets (1Kgs 18:4) and brought about war, siege, desolation, even cannibalism (2Kgs 6:24-31). For Jesus to liken the "acceptable year of the Lord" to the days that preceded Israel's exile would hardly figure those in Israel in a positive light. Rather, it would assert an extreme and urgent division within Israel between the minority who sided with such persecuted prophets and those who, under the official leadership of the time, rejected the purposes of God for themselves (cf. Lk 7:30). Seen in this light, Jesus' "words of grace" actually involve a clashing juxtaposition between Isaiah's announcement of good news and a situation of crisis within Israel—a crisis that demands a choice (so Lk 11:23).

This reading of Lk 4:16-30 as a contemporary dialogue with Judaism and/or Jewish Christianity demonstrates the remarkable degree to which Luke has reworked the elements of his Markan source. The original rejection of Jesus on the grounds of his parochial status has been transposed, through reflection upon the deep meaning of the parable about the rejection of a prophet, into a story that is simultaneously a portrayal of an event in the life of Jesus and an *anticipation* (ἐροεῖτέ, v.23!) of the way in which the life

of Jesus will be recapitulated in the life of the later church. The theme of the gentiles and Israel, which was already intimated in Simeon's prophecy, is developed and ingrained more deeply with the theme of a division within Israel. The role of scripture in explicating and justifying the surprising state of affairs of the Christian movement is likewise demonstrated. And all of this is part of a wider claim that what has been written in the prophets—God's eschatological, enigmatic fidelity to Israel—is being fulfilled today (v.21).

If the contemporary frame of reference suggested above is allowed to have its full effect, the statement of Jesus that Isaiah's vision is "fulfilled today in your hearing" may also be directed to Luke's readers, for whom the author is concerned to explicate the nature of the things fulfilled (so Lk 1:1). If so, it may be that the twice-repeated promise of ἄφεσις in Isaiah's prophecy hints at a reply to the potential impression, frequently asserted as a theological certitude, that the function of this narrative is to denounce both the Nazareth synagogue and the Jewish people *in toto*.⁷² Although ἄφεσις, as part of the prophetic imagery of Isaiah, here functions as a picture of release from captivity, as Luke's story proceeds his use of the term develops to include

⁷² Luke's attention to ἄφεσις in this citation is clear from that fact that, in addition to writing a narrative in which ἄφεσις is central to the *kerygma* of the apostles (Lk 24:47; Acts 2:38, 5:31, 8:22, 10:43, 13:38, 26:18), Luke has associated Is 58:6 with Is 61:1 by means of this catchword, which is present in both passages. See James A. Sanders, "From Isaiah to Luke," in *Luke and Scripture*, 21.

forgiveness of sin and conversion to the community of Jesus (cf. Lk 24:47, Acts 2:38, 10:43, 13:38, 26:18). If ἄφεσις is part of Jesus' proclamation to Nazareth and Luke's message to his Jewish readers, it hardly follows as obvious that Luke understands them to be inexorably damned. The episode may leave much that is mysterious and unexplained—and which may remain unexplained when Luke's narrative reaches its end 48 chapters later. But it presents, in a remarkably condensed scene, the themes that have occupied Luke's lengthy introduction to his gospel. We now turn to consider how these themes are developed in the rest of Luke's gospel and to inquire after the import of their presentation for the author's portrayal of Jewish and Christian identities.

3. Jesus and the Opponents

Following his distinctive series of programmatic introductions, Luke presents his version of the life and ministry of Jesus. Within this story, scenes of conflict with religious authorities, in addition to their biographical importance, serve as vehicles for conveying Luke's christological and ecclesiological convictions. Because these scenes of conflict typically draw a contrast between Jesus (or sometimes his followers) and these authorities, these scenes are a natural starting place for considering the question of how Luke portrays and/or juxtaposes non-Christian Jewish and Christian identities. The present chapter therefore examines these conflicts with opponents, while the next chapter will consider conflicts between Jesus and his disciples. Yet Luke's gospel is not simply a story of conflict; the evangelist refers to the gospel narrative as the "account of all that Jesus began to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). For this reason, before turning to the motif of conflict, we should consider briefly several non-controversial episodes in Luke's central section in which the relation of Jesus to his contemporaries is exhibited.

3.1 Healings and Miracles

Like the gospel tradition broadly, Luke's narrative avoids recounting episodes of Jesus' life that are unremarkable or mundane. Rather, Luke consistently portrays Jesus as one "filled with the Holy Spirit and power" who "went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him" (Acts 10:38). This

summary, taken from Peter's sermon at Caesarea, demonstrates the close connection in Luke's thought between Jesus' actions and his unique identity. The identity of Jesus, as we will see, carries implications for the identity of the other characters in Luke's story—all of whom are "Jewish" (in the second-order sense outlined in Chapter 1) and some of whom become disciples (whom we may thus consider "Christian"). But there can be no adequate understanding of these identities without a recognition that Luke's story is, firstly, about Jesus. There is thus a primacy, for our topic, in the scenes in Luke's gospel that are devoid of controversy—episodes in which Jesus is simply *active* in the midst of Israel, teaching, healing, casting out demons, and working miracles among the crowds.

This primacy is evident in the placement of Lk 4:31-4 immediately after the proleptic event at Nazareth. Jesus' ministry begins simply (as was anticipated at 4:14-15) with astounding displays of his power in the synagogue at Capernaum, in the house of Peter's mother-in-law, and among "as many as were sick" in that city (4:40). It is significant that these public healings are accompanied by the demonstrable victory of Jesus over demons, who in their defeat announce Jesus' unique identity as "the Holy one of God" (4:34), "the son of God" (4:41). The result of all this is a growing recognition however, vague, that Jesus' is no ordinary person:

They were all amazed and kept saying to one another, "What kind of utterance is this? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they

come out!” And news of him was going out to every place in the region. (Lk 4:36-37; cf. v.42b)

Though the crowds at Capernaum wish to keep the wonder-worker among them, he “must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God *to the other cities also*, for I was sent for that purpose” (4:43). The events at Capernaum, and the recognition Jesus receives there, are thus typical of the character and purpose of Jesus’ proclamation, and the effect of Jesus’ miracles is to foreground the significance of Jesus’ person. Thus it is that after the healing of the centurion’s servant and the raising of the widow of Nain, the crowds announce the meaning of these events: “A great prophet has arisen among us! God has visited his people!” (ἐπεσκέψατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ; 7:16). This echo of Zachariah’s song, in which God’s people is explicitly identified as Israel (Εὐλογητὸς κύριος ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, ὅτι ἐπεσκέψατο καὶ ἐποίησεν λύτρωσιν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ, 1:68), makes clear that Jesus’ identity and action is understood by Luke to be bound up with God’s fidelity to the nation. N.T. Wright has argued that these miracles were understood by the historical Jesus and his contemporaries as symbolic expressions of divine fidelity to Israel:

The effect of these cures, therefore, was not merely to bring physical healing...but to reconstitute those healed as members of the people of Israel’s

god. In other words, these healings, at the deepest level of understanding on the part of Jesus and his contemporaries, would be seen as part of his total ministry...The vindication for which Israel looked to her god was being brought forward into the present, close up, in the case of these individuals.¹

Although Wright's project of reconstructing the historical Jesus and his first hearers is different from the question that occupies this study, he expresses well the understanding of the third evangelist, for whom Jesus' actions of healing, exorcisms, and resurrection prompt the conclusion that God is among his people, expressing faithfulness to Israel.

However, this faithfulness of God does not prompt an undivided faith among the members of Israel, and this point is made clear through Jesus' occasional reflection upon the quality of the responses to his miracles. Lk 7:1-10 recounts the remarkable faith of a gentile centurion who, professing his unworthiness to have Jesus visit him, nevertheless expresses his confidence that Jesus can heal his servant with a word (7:6-9). Jesus is astounded at this statement and, turning to the accompanying crowd, announces, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith!" (7:9). In the Matthean version the centurion himself meets Jesus, who, having praised his faith over that of Israel, announces that "many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham

¹ N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God, Vol 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 192.

and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Mt 8:11-12). The point of this narrative in the gospel of Matthew is that the “children of the kingdom” have been displaced by gentiles who exhibit superior faith. In Luke, however, the relation of those “in Israel” to the gentile centurion is more complex. The Lukan centurion does not meet Jesus in person but instead sends emissaries, since he himself is unworthy to come to Jesus (οὐ γὰρ ἰκανός εἰμι ἵνα...εἰσέλθῃς · οὐδὲ ἑμαυτὸν ἠξιώσα πρὸς σὲ ἐλθεῖν, 7:6-7). Importantly, he sends “elders of the Jews,” whom he judges to be worthier than himself (7:3). When these Jewish elders find Jesus they extol the centurion as one who “loves our nation (τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν) and built our synagogue for us” and thus is worthy (ἄξιός ἐστιν) of the kindness for which they earnestly implore Jesus (7:4-5).² Although Jesus is willing to heal the centurion’s servant in person, the centurion again sends friends who again insist upon his worthiness, at which point Jesus heals the man with a word (7:6-10). All this protesting underscores

² If we were convinced that, where Luke shares a source with Matthew against Mark, he is following Matthew, we could read in Luke’s redaction of Matthew here a rejection of Matthew’s simple contrast between Jewish unbelief and gentile faith. As outlined in the introduction, however, this source-critical judgment is uncertain and thus not determinative for the present interpretation. We may nonetheless observe in Matthew’s text one way in which the story Luke tells was told differently by another author, and this comparison helps set in relief the distinctive character of the Lukan text.

the centurion's humility and thus, for the readers, his worthiness. In the narrative this worthiness is demonstrated by deference to and dependence upon Jewish religious authorities and by support of and attachment to the synagogue and nation of the Jews. The centurion's faith is praised above that of those "in Israel," but his is nonetheless a faith that does homage rather than expressing hostility to the Jewish people and that is respected by the "elders" among them, who compete with him in mutual displays of honor as each commends the other.³

This portrayal anticipates subtly Luke's sustained apologetic for gentile inclusion in Acts. Appealing for Peter to visit Cornelius, those who are sent by the centurion describe Cornelius as "a devout and God-fearing man who gave great alms to the people and prayed constantly to God," and who was "well attested by the whole nation of the Jews" (Acts 10:2, 22). When Peter, a Jew (explicitly so called at 10:28), visits Cornelius, the centurion honors him with bodily prostrations (10:25). Raising him up, however, Peter counter-commends Cornelius as "acceptable to God" (10:35) and receives him through baptism into an extended, intimate fellowship (10:48; cf. 11:2-3). Thus, in Acts 10 as in Lk 7:1-10, a gentile centurion's faith is commended by recounting his fidelity to Jewish piety (devotion to the synagogue, alms, and prayer) and by a living connection

³ As Jervell rightly observes, pious gentiles in Luke's gospel consistently display this posture toward the Jewish nation. See Jervell, "The Church of Jews and Godfearers," in *Luke-Acts and the Jews: Eight Critical Perspectives*, 11-20.

with the Jewish people toward whom he is shown to be humble, deferential, and acceptable. These parallels suggest that in Luke's telling of Jesus' encounter with the centurion and his Jewish friends we find not the construction of mutually exclusive identities but a more complex relationship among Jews and gentiles that anticipates their mutuality in the later church.⁴

If the scene in Lk 7:1-10 thus makes sense as a proleptic apology for gentile inclusion in the later church, it presents Jewish identity as complex. On the one hand, the Jewish elders receive no specific rebuke from Jesus and are presented as generous and people of good will. On the other hand, the centurion's extraordinary faith is contrasted with that of those in Israel, who, though they are not said to *lack* faith, nevertheless lack the sort of faith (τοσαύτην πίστιν) that causes Jesus to marvel (7:9). The scene thus calls into question the character of Jewish response to Jesus through a contrast with the astounding faith of a gentile.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Luke, following earlier Christian practice, designates followers of Jesus with the unqualified term "believers" (πιστεύοντες, e.g. Acts 2:44). On its own, this usage might suggest that those who outside the church could be

⁴ It is fitting that, with the arrival of the "elders of the Jews," the reader meets with Luke's first use of the term Ἰουδαῖος in a display of mutual honoring between Jew and gentile, even as this mutuality nevertheless envisions the religious primacy of the Jewish nation. Here, as elsewhere, the influence of Paul may be felt (cf. Rom 1:16, 15:27).

described simply as “unbelievers.” However, Luke does not use such terminology as an unequivocal designation of Jews.⁵ Rather, the language of Jesus’ statement in 7:9 (τοσαύτην πίστιν) suggests that faith may be conceived by Luke as a virtue that is possessed in varying degrees—some more commendable than others—rather than an all-or-nothing entity that is the property of a single righteous community (cf. the similar treatment of “hope” in Acts 24:15). The Jewish delegates sent by the centurion do, after all, believe that Jesus is able to heal his servant. On the other hand, failure to believe in Jesus as he is proclaimed by the church has severe effects for Luke (so Acts 3:22-23). It may be that place of faith within Luke’s theological grammar can only be characterized as a dialectical combination of different points of view. However these deep waters are to be navigated, the story of the centurion and his Jewish friends reveals that, for Luke, the superior quality of gentile faith functions to call into question the quality, rather than the existence, of Jewish faith.

Luke extends this questioning of Jewish fidelity through a contrast with gentile faith in the uniquely Lukan episode of the healing of ten lepers. Like the centurion, the lepers who meet Jesus as he enters a city keep their distance from him but ask for his healing, which they receive at his word (Lk 17:12-19). Only one of the ten, a Samaritan, returns to thank Jesus, prompting him to ask, “Were not the ten cleansed? But where are

⁵ In the phrase ἀπειθήσαντες Ἰουδαῖοι in Acts 14:2, the participle is a limiting qualifier, rather than an appositive: “the Jews who did not believe” (cf. 14:1, where many do believe).

the nine? Was none found to return and give praise to God *except this foreigner* (ἀλλογενής)?” (17:17-18). The designation of the Samaritan as a foreigner makes sense only in contrast to a group that is not foreign, namely Israel. Jesus is thus exasperated by the ungracious response of the nine, particularly the absence of any Jews who might appropriately “return and give praise to God.” He explicitly commends the gentile Samaritan’s faith (17:19), as he did that of the centurion in Capernaum (7:9), but the relative lack of faith among Israelites is a matter that baffles and frustrates him. This mood of frustration and anger over Jewish unbelief reveals that, for Luke’s Jesus, Jewish unbelief is a *problem*, rather than a happy presupposition for the displacement of Israel by faithful gentiles in the Lukan *Heilsgeschichte*.

3.2 Controversies during and about Healing

One memorable aspect of the gospel tradition is its portrayal of controversies with Jesus’ religious contemporaries, particularly those who are in various ways teachers and leaders. In the centuries since the writing of the New Testament, these controversies have been sites for Christian polemics against the perverseness of Jewish leaders and the general superiority of Christianity to Judaism.⁶ In light of this reception

⁶ See, for example, Robert L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late 4th Century* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1983).

history, it is perhaps not surprising that Rudolf Bultmann saw in these gospel narratives the retrojection of early Christian controversies with non-Christian Jews into the life of Jesus.⁷ While this study shares with Bultmann and modern scholarship generally the judgment that the gospels often function as a mirror reflecting the outlook and situation of their authors rather than a simple window into the life of Jesus, the focus of concern in form-critical discussions of these controversy episodes has often been the question of whether they relay actual events in the life of the historical Jesus or whether they stem from the early church's conflicts with the synagogue. Luke's primary concern in the presentation of these traditions, however, is neither ecclesial autobiography nor bare historiography of Jesus' life. Rather, through these traditions of conflict Luke crafts a distinctive christological presentation of Jesus in confrontation with the teachers of Israel.

The fact that these scenes in Luke are chiefly about the identity of Jesus, rather than about events in his life or parallel events in the life of the later church, is apparent from the shape of the story of the healing of the paralytic in Lk 5:17-26, Luke's first controversy episode.⁸ The controversial element in the story is not the healing of the man but Jesus' claim to forgive sins (5:20-21). This claim provokes, in Luke's telling, an

⁷ Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. John Marsh, rev. ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1972), 12-27.

⁸ Luke's story is drawn from Mk 2:1-12 (cf. the less colorful parallel at Mt 9:2-8)..

immediate question about Jesus' identity: "Who is this (τίς ἐστιν οὗτος) who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins except God alone?" (5:21). Luke slightly reshapes the question, "Why does this man speak this way?" (τί οὗτος οὕτως λαλεῖ; Mk 2:7) to highlight the identity claim implicit in Jesus' question. This identity is legitimated through the sudden healing of the paralytic, "so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) to forgive sins" (5:24). The question "Who is this?" is answered through the healing: Jesus is the Danielic "Son of Man" with "power" on earth to heal and forgive sins (Dan 7:13-14 LXX). This allusion to the figure from Daniel's vision, an allusion already present in Mk 2:10, is strengthened by Luke's addition to Mark of the statement in 5:17 that "the power of the Lord was with him to heal." In Daniel's vision the "one like a son of man" is presented with "royal authority" (ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία βασιλική), which he exercises over "all the nations of the earth" (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς, Dan 7:13-14).⁹ Luke's statement that the power of the Lord was with Jesus amplifies the connection between

⁹ This is the reading of the *o'* text of Joseph Ziegler. Ziegler's *θ'* text reads at 7:14 καὶ αὐτῷ ἐδόθη ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ βασιλεία, καὶ πάντες οἱ λαοὶ, φυλαί, γλώσσαι αὐτῷ δουλεύουσιν. Both texts include the phrase ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος predicated of the υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου in the preceding verse. See Joseph Ziegler, ed., *Susana, Daniel, Bel et Draco. Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Göttingensis editum* 16. 2nd Ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1999).

Jesus' identity as the Son of Man and his possession on earth of God's power. Luke's enhancement of this intertextual echo is thus focused not on controversies of Luke's day about whether *the church* could remit sins, as Bultmann imagined.¹⁰ Rather, Luke is asserting the *einmalig* character of Jesus' own messianic identity, in whom the church's message of forgiveness is grounded (cf. Acts 10:43). There is thus no trace in this story of any reference to Jesus' disciples; the twelve are not chosen until Lk 6:13. It is, then, a story about Jesus. But if Jesus is the hero of the story, there is also a clear opposition: "Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting by, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem" (5:17). Whereas Mark introduces only "some of the scribes" (2:6) in the middle of the story, Luke's presentation of law teachers drawn from all Israel heightens the motif of encounter between the Son of Man and those representatives of Torah fidelity for whom Jesus' identity claims raise provocative questions.¹¹

¹⁰ According to Bultmann, this was the original function of this controversy story (*History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 15-16). However, I am unaware of any evidence outside of this passage that the ability to pronounce forgiveness was a contested issue in early Christianity.

¹¹ Luke replaces Mark's *τινες τῶν γραμματέων* (Mk 2:6) with *νομοδιδάσκαλοι* (5:17). On the Luke's concern with the Law more broadly, see S.G. Wilson, *Luke and the Law*, SNTSMS 50 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

In Lk 11:14-23, another healing by Jesus prompts a debate about whether Jesus is inspired by Beelzebul, the prince of demons. Like the healing of the paralytic, this story is focused primarily on the question of Jesus' identity, which carries implications for those who oppose him. When some from the crowd question the source of Jesus' authority over demons, Jesus argues that division renders any kingdom powerless. From this it follows that Satan cannot oppose Satan, and so one is either on the side of Satan or against him. Other exorcists, the "sons" of Jesus' opponents, are known to the crowds, and their effective exorcisms demonstrate Jesus' point (11:17-19). Since one must either side with or oppose Satan, Jesus' own allegiance is clear: "If I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (11:20). Through the performance of exorcisms, Jesus is revealed as the "stronger one" who has overcome the demonic "strong man" who took temporary refuge in the possessed but is now overpowered and divested of human armor (11:21-22). At this point in the dialogue Jesus might have sufficiently responded to the question about his authority. But he goes further.

Jesus' divine authority carries a severe implication for hearers who oppose him. The kingdom of God does not simply present itself neutrally to them as a claim to be considered; it overtakes them (ἐφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, 11:20), just as Jesus has overtaken and conquered the demon (ἐπελθὼν νικήσῃ, 11:22). The common motif of spiritual conquest does not equate the crowds with the demons at this point, but Jesus seems to

stand against both at once, calling for full allegiance: “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters” (ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετ’ ἐμοῦ σκορπίζει, 11:23). In the context of exorcism, a statement about those who scatter away from Jesus would be an apt description of the action of the demons themselves, but Jesus’ words have intertwined the actions of the demons with those of Jesus’ opponents, revealing the social import of this spiritual conflict.

C.F. Evans dryly comments that Jesus’ discussion of the wandering of unclean spirits in 11:24-26 “reads like an extract from a text book on demonology.”¹² But, in Luke’s context at least, the description of the movement of spirits is not an esoteric reflection on demonic activity appended to the controversy but a parenetic response to that controversy.¹³ The object of the parenthesis is not simply the need for the disciples to be wary of evil spirits, as Bovon and Fitzmyer conclude.¹⁴ Though this concern is certainly present, the coordination of the movements of spirits with Jesus’ demonstration of superiority over demons and his demand for full allegiance to himself has the effect of coordinating the actions of those who oppose him with those of the

¹² C.F. Evans, *Saint Luke*, TPINTC (London: SCM, 1990), 494; cf. Joel Green, *Luke*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 459.

¹³ So Bovon, *Luke 2*, 124-25. For Evans, the practical implication of this information about demonic possession is the principle that “a state of neutrality between good and evil is impossible” (*Saint Luke*, 494).

¹⁴ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:924-25.

demons he opposes. Both the demons and the unnamed human opponents (“some of them,” 11:15) who claim Jesus is possessed by the prince of demons stand opposed to Jesus. The dispersive movements of the exorcised demon (ἐξέληθη ... διέρχεται, 11:24) are parallel to the scattering of “whoever does not gather with me” (11:23). This subtle parallel demonstrates that the alternative to siding with Jesus is to wander in the realm of demons “seeking rest and finding none” and exposed to hostile, demonic influences (11:24a). This is the meaning of the story about the return of the demon to its former house: failing to gather with Jesus leaves one exposed to the spiritual evils that are not permanently eradicated by the exorcisms of the present moment (11:24b-26).

This claim that those who do not gather with Jesus scatter should be considered in light of Jesus’ first lament over Jerusalem, in which similar language is used with regard to the nation:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often have I desired to gather your children together (ἐπισυνάξει) as a hen gathers her own brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Behold, your house is left to you (ἀφίεται ὑμῖν ὁ οἶκος ὑμῶν). (Lk 13:33-34)

Here Jesus speaks as though he had hoped to embody the prophetic hope that God would gather Israel together, perhaps from the scattering effects of an enduring exile.¹⁵ The resistance to that gathering now means that Jerusalem's "house" is abandoned without defense. The statement that Jerusalem will no longer see Jesus is a threat that, in view of the saying of 11:23 in its context, makes sense. Failing to gather together with Jesus leaves Jerusalem's house defenseless against demonic tyranny.

The language of these passages reveals an important aspect of Luke's portrayal of Jewish and Christian identities. Although Luke did not author the saying at 11:23, he chose to include it in an unmodified form (cf. the verbatim parallel at Mt 12:30) and to employ the motif of gathering in the uniquely Lukan saying at 13:34. These choices suggest that the author is deliberate in employing this imagery of gathering and leaving/scattering. In view of the unity of the church in Acts, which Luke is at pains to stress, we should understand the imagery of gathering with Jesus to anticipate, in some way, the later Christian church. Because identity has to do with coherence, the idea of gathering is well-suited to describing the process of forming a coherent identity. In 11:23 this gathering occurs on the level of the individual (ὁ...ὦν μετ')

¹⁵ Isaiah 49:6, a text to which Luke alludes multiple times (see Lk 2:32; Acts 13:47, 26:23), speaks of the servant restoring τὴν διασπορὰν τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ. On the re-gathering of Israel in Luke-Acts, see Lohfink, *Sammlung*; Fuller, *The Restoration of Israel in Luke-Acts*. For the role of the servant figure in Luke-Acts, see Mallen, *Reading and Transformation of Isaiah*.

ἐμοῦ...ὄ...συνάγων) but the idea of gathering involves a collective, corporate result (thus, ἠθέλησα ἐπισυνάξαι τὰ τέκνα σου, 13:34). In Luke's grammar, the opposite of an identity that coheres in Jesus is not a coherent alterity—a focused and demonized other—but a diffuse, scattered existence, of being left to oneself (so ἀφίεται ὑμῖν, 13:35), free, like the demons, to “pass through waterless places seeking rest and finding none” (11:24). These are hardly “live and let live” sayings; they are warnings of judgment. But they suggest that the opposite of identification with Jesus is not an alternative counter-coherence, a clearly constructed alterity, but a scattered incoherence. Such incoherence does not serve as the conceptual antipode against which identification with Jesus achieves a coherent meaning for the church. Rather, the center of gravity for that coherence is the identity of Jesus, the authoritative “Son of Man” filled with “the power of the Lord” (5:17, 24) and the “stronger one” who vanquishes the devil with the finger of God and ushers in God's kingdom (11:20, 22). Though Luke does not directly identify Jesus' opponents with the demons, he closely associates them by contrasting their scattered existence to the unity of the church that gathers around Jesus. If, as Pao has cogently argued, the notion of a release from exile through participation in a new Exodus is part of the substructure of Luke's vision of salvation, the opposite to participating in this redemptive event is, it seems, the experience of perpetual exile.¹⁶

¹⁶ See David Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*, 129-131.

However, to this severe portrayal of Jesus' opponents and their demonic analogues, Luke adds a surprising counterpoint. In Lk 9:49-50, John the disciple explains the attempt to stop a man from casting out demons in Jesus' name "because he did not follow with us" (9:49). Jesus rebukes the twelve with what appears to be the reversal of the principle articulated at the close of the Beelzebul controversy: "Do not hinder him, for whoever is not against you is for you" (ὁς γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν καθ' ὑμῶν, ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐστίν, Lk 9:50). Luke is the only gospel to include this saying from Mk 9:40 along with the statement that those who are not with Jesus are against him (11:23a; cf. Mt 12:30a). If direct opposition to Jesus merits the harsh response of 11:23, according to which identification/non-identification with Jesus is pointedly expressed, the absence of such hostility to the church—Jesus, after all, is absent in the scene John reports at Lk 9:49—invites a more generous consideration of the possibility of amicable relations with those who follow different patterns of discipleship. It is possible even for those who do not "follow with" the disciples to be, in some sense, "for them." The saying, in contrast to that at 11:23a, is not about opposition to Jesus but about the relation to "you"—that is, the church. It may be that this different vision obtains because the strange exorcist casts out demons in *Jesus'* name and is thus part of the Jesus movement in a way the opponents at the Beelzebul controversy are not. Bovon, who rightly recognizes part of the ecclesial import of the saying, fails to consider its applicability beyond Christian community, regarding it only as a response to "competing missions" in early

Christianity.¹⁷ This interpretation is partially correct, for the context of the saying indicates that action in Jesus' name is certainly in view, and the diversity of the church in Acts makes the "competing missions" hypothesis likely. But the statement "whoever is not against you is for you" is also aptly suited to characters in Luke's narrative who are *not* identified with the Christian movement and yet are demonstrably not against it. Joseph of Arimathea is not a member of the church in Luke's gospel but only of the council that condemned Jesus, though Joseph himself did not agree with that decision (23:50-51). His righteousness is matched by the justice of Gamaliel, also a member of the council, who intervenes to stop the council from hindering the apostles from proclaiming Jesus (Acts 5:33-39). These narrative examples demonstrate that the saying of Lk 9:50 may apply beyond the bounds of those who act overtly in Jesus' name. For Luke, then, a firm division that demarcates those who "gather" with Jesus from everyone else may not be the only way of conceiving the relationship between Christian identity and "others," for some of those "others" who do not follow with the church nevertheless stand alongside it as supportive friends.

¹⁷ So Bovon, *Luke 1*, 396.

3.3 Controversies over the Sabbath

The identity and mission of Jesus is central as well to the controversies over Sabbath observance in Luke. Luke, along with Matthew, shares the two Markan controversy episodes of the plucking of grain on the Sabbath (6:1-5) and of Jesus' Sabbath healing of a man with a withered hand (6:6-11). Following these episodes Luke has included or created two unique stories—the healing of a bent woman (13:10-17) and the curing of a man with dropsy (14:1-6). This insertion of two additional Sabbath controversy episodes suggests that Luke has a special concern with the Sabbath. For Bultmann and many following him, the purpose of these stories is found “in the early Church’s disputes about the Sabbath.”¹⁸ For Bovon and Sanders, these disputes are *internal* to the gentile church and relate to the desire of some of its members to imitate Jewish Sabbath practice.¹⁹ However, as Oliver argues, Luke does not undermine the basic Jewish conviction that the Sabbath must be honored, and this is part of the ongoing reassessment of Luke’s relation to Judaism and Jewish Christianity.²⁰ While New

¹⁸ Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 12; cf. Bovon, *Luke 1*, 198-200; idem, *Luke 2*, 280; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:606.

¹⁹ Bovon is confident that Luke’s community has already “broken off contact” with Jews (*Luke 1*, 200). For Sanders, “The argument is with those Christians who try to continue to be Jews, whereas for Luke the only true Christianity is Gentile Christianity” (*The Jews in Luke-Acts*, 194-5).

²⁰ See the extended discussion in Oliver, *Torah Practice*, 80-237.

Testament scholars have tended to debate the meaning of the Sabbath controversies in light of the social situations of the evangelists, a close reading of Luke's Sabbath controversy episodes show that Luke appears generally unconcerned with ecclesial Sabbath ethics and focused instead on demonstrating Jesus' special identity as the Lord of the Sabbath.

The first Sabbath controversy in Lk 6:1-5 is the only one that does not involve miraculous healing, and it is the only one in which the actions of Jesus' disciples, rather than Jesus, are in question. Although disputes over the issue of Sabbath observance in the early church appear to have been relatively mild compared to issues like circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath was a point of contention among some early Christians (see, e.g., Rom 14:5, Gal 4:10, Col 2:16; cf. Heb 4:9). It is possible, then, that this first episode of Sabbath controversy, drawn from Mk 2:23-28, preserves the memory of such conflicts, which may have been over mundane issues like plucking grain for personal consumption.²¹ But this episode, as preserved in Mark and especially as shaped by Luke, draws attention away from such ethical disputes and focuses instead on the unique identity of Jesus.

When the Pharisees question why Jesus' disciples pluck grain on the Sabbath, Jesus cites the action of David when he was hungry in 1Sam 21:1-6. Jesus, like David,

²¹ As Bultmann argues, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 16-17; cf. Bovon, *Luke 1*, 198.

allows an exception to the commandment against harvesting in a situation of human need. After likening himself to David, who broke the law by taking consecrated bread in order to provide for his hungry companions, Jesus declares that “the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath” (κύριός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ τοῦ σαββάτου) (6:5).²² By retaining the version of this statement at Mk 2:28 while eliminating the saying at Mk 2:27, Luke heightens the uniqueness of Jesus’ authority implied in the double statement that the Son of Man is Lord, and that his lordship extends to the Sabbath.²³ Together with the bold comparison with David, the culmination of the episode in this saying brings into focus the claim that Jesus is Lord over the Sabbath. Any significance this story might have for the church’s Sabbath practices vis-à-vis those of the synagogue is secondary to this central christological concern.

²² Here I differ with the judgment of the editors of NA28. The reading of NA28, κύριός ἐστιν τοῦ σαββάτου ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, is present in B and κ. Nevertheless, this phrasing at Lk 6:5 appears to be an assimilation to the more stable text of Mt 12:8. That Luke instead preserved the Markan form of the saying is indicated especially by its preservation in A, D, and E^{Marcion}, which, together with the majority text, maintain Luke’s agreement with Mark against the early assimilation to Matthew.

²³ The statement in Mk 2:27 suggests that the Sabbath is subordinate to human need generally. While Luke likely agrees with this claim, the statement is a potential distraction from the unique christological claim of Mk 2:28—hence Luke’s omission of it. So C. Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 105-111; cf. Wilson, *Luke and the Law*, SNTSMS 50 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 38.

This christological focus of the developing tradition of Sabbath controversies becomes clearer as the disputes become focused on the person of Jesus as the one whose ministry shades the Sabbath with eschatological significance as a day of liberation.²⁴ This focus comes to expression most clearly in the straightening of the bent woman in Lk 13:10-17. Unlike the other Sabbath miracles, this healing is portrayed as an episode in a much broader story of Jesus' fidelity to Abraham's children in opposition to the work of Satan.²⁵ Unlike the man with the withered hand or the man with dropsy, this woman is portrayed as the victim of a personal demonic oppressor, who has subjugated her for eighteen years (13:11, 16). The episode contains a striking concentration of the language of bondage and release. In response to the synagogue leader's rebuke, Jesus responds,

Does not each of you on the Sabbath loose (λύει) his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan bound (ἔδησεν)—behold, for eighteen years! (ἰδοὺ δέκα

²⁴ W.D. Davies refers to the tradition as "a snowball rolling downhill" (*Matthew*, Vol. 2, ICC [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991], 304). Mark and Matthew contain two Sabbath controversy scenes, while Luke contains four. Codex Bezae inserts a fifth episode at Lk 6:5, in which Jesus warns a man he finds working on the Sabbath that he had better know what he is doing. This latter apocryphal episode offers the clearest evidence of a concern to legitimize ecclesial ethics within the gospel traditions of Sabbath controversy, and in its remarkable lack of concern with Jesus' identity it stands out from the others.

²⁵ Nils Dahl, "The Story of Abraham in Luke-Acts," in *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church*, 66-86.

καὶ ὀκτῶ ἔτη)—is it not necessary for her to be released from this bondage (δεῖ λυθῆναι ἀπὸ τοῦ δεσμοῦ τούτου) *on the day of the Sabbath?* (Lk 13:15-16)

The positioning of the phrase “on the day of the Sabbath” in the final emphatic position is not accidental. Jesus does not tell the crowd that the Sabbath is an *allowable* day for healing; rather he announces that the Sabbath is *the* day in which he must liberate Abraham’s children from Satan’s bondage.²⁶ The vision of apocalyptic redemption evoked in this passage recalls the potent language of Jesus’ prophetic calling expressed in the vision of Isaiah, “to send the oppressed away in freedom” (4:18, citing Is 58:6). In its immediate context in Isaiah, this phrase is intended to correct a people that keeps a regular fast as “a day acceptable to the Lord” while failing to practice kindness to the vulnerable and oppressed (Is 58:1-9). Isaiah 58:6 explicitly reinterprets fasting as the performance of acts of mercy to the vulnerable. Jesus here makes a similar claim regarding the Sabbath, the true keeping of which is oriented toward the eradication of suffering. To borrow a phrase from Isaiah, the Sabbath is the “acceptable day” for liberation in an eschatological rather than a permissive sense.²⁷

²⁶ Cf. Marcus’ suggestion that the apocalyptic Jewish revolutionaries of the revolt against Rome may have considered the Sabbath an especially good day for fighting in God’s holy war (*Mark*, 1:246-47).

²⁷ On Luke’s theological interest in Sabbath as a time of deliverance, see James A. Sanders, “Sins, Debts, and Jubilee Release” in *Luke and Scripture*, 84-92; John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*, 64-77;

The two remaining controversies over Sabbath healing follow the same pattern as those discussed above and confirm the interpretation of Sabbath given most explicitly in 13:15-16. In the brief accounts of healing of the man with the withered hand (6:6-11) and the man with dropsy (14:1-6), Jesus heals on the Sabbath under the scrutiny of law-observant onlookers, whose rival vision of the Sabbath disallows his work of healing. Jesus' pointed questioning about what is really lawful silences his opponents, and the healing exhibits the appropriateness of Jesus' actions.²⁸ The first of these episodes ends with the statement that the scribes and Pharisees "were filled with folly and discussed with each other what they might do with regard to Jesus" (6:11).²⁹ Of all the Lukan Sabbath controversies, only here do the opponents take any action against Jesus. And

David Smith, "'No Poor Among Them': Sabbath and Jubilee Years in Lukan Social Ethics," *HBT* 40 (2) (2018): 142-165.

²⁸ The episode at Lk 14:1-6 appears modeled on the scene at Lk 6:6-10 (which is itself dependent on Mk 3:1-6). In addition to the common structure of the two scenes in Luke, compare παρατηροῦντο (6:7) with παρατηρούμενοι (14:1); εἰ ἔξεστιν τῷ σαββάτῳ ἀγαθοποιῆσαι ἢ κακοποιῆσαι, ψυχὴν σῶσαι ἢ ἀπολέσαι (6:9) with ἔξεστιν τῷ σαββάτῳ θεραπεῦσαι ἢ οὐ (14:3).

²⁹ Luke states that the opponents were "filled with folly/madness" (ἐπλήσθησαν ἀνοίας), rather than "filled with fury" (NRSV). Luke wishes to indicate not extreme anger but a disabled mental state, for unlike the Markan opponents, the Lukan onlookers do not appear to know how to respond. For Luke's ability to describe extreme anger unambiguously, see Lk 4:28; Acts 19:28; cf. Acts 5:33, 7:54, 26:11.

yet they appear less hostile here than in Mark, who writes, "The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him" (Mk 3:6). The response at 14:6, as at 13:17 and 6:5, is silence, as the Pharisees ponder, so it seems, what to make of Jesus.

The space and theological weight given to Sabbath controversies in Luke suggest that these episodes illustrate an important point: the letter of the law of Sabbath observance is subordinate to relief from hardship, which is the true meaning of the Sabbath. Yet if Luke were concerned with this position as a practical ethical principle, according to which he hoped to differentiate the praxis of his community from that of non-Christian Jews, it would hardly make sense for him to omit the clearest articulation of that principle in Mk 2:27 or to multiply stories of Jesus' miraculous Sabbath healing. Instead, contrary to the blanket assertions of Bovon and Goulder, it seems that Luke is relatively uninterested in the question of ecclesial Sabbath ethics. Rather, he wants to illustrate Jesus' own unique Sabbath practice as this stands over against the mistaken view of the law held by his opponents. That is, the stories illustrate Jesus' identity as Lord of the Sabbath and the opposition directed toward Jesus by those who, from Luke's perspective, ought to have received him but were misled by their misperception of the law. If there is an ecclesial significance for these stories, it lies not in the parabolic legitimization of ecclesial Sabbath ethics, about which Luke is mostly silent, but in the continued confrontation by early Christians with a view of the law that fails to recognize

the law's eschatological fulfillment in Jesus. Christology, rather than ecclesiology, is the decisive issue.³⁰

3.4 Controversies over the Table

It is well known that what, how, and with whom one eats were important issues in the ancient world in general and, in different ways, among Jews and Christians in particular.³¹ It is therefore not surprising that there is a lot of eating in Luke's gospel as well as extended discourses about the circumstances of Jesus' eating. Strikingly, Luke amplifies and develops the traditions related to Jesus' own table practices not only to draw attention to the importance of practical table fellowship in early Christianity but to utilize table fellowship as a literary *topos* for the portrayal of the evangelist's central theological convictions.

³⁰ If ecclesial Sabbath practice were the issue, we might have expected Luke to justify an alternative Sabbath practice in the church at some point in Acts. He does not, however, and a close analysis of what he says about the Sabbath elsewhere suggests that he venerates it. See Oliver, *Torah Practice*, 80-237. These stories are thus not about distinguishing two communities and their halakot; they are proclamations of Jesus.

³¹ See Inge Nielsen and Hanne Sigismund Nielsen, eds., *Meals in a Social Context: Aspects of the Communal Meal in the Hellenistic and Roman World*, Aarhus Studies in Mediterranean Antiquity 1 (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1998).

In Lk 5:29-32, Luke retains the tradition from Mk 2:15-17 in which Jesus is criticized by Pharisees for eating with tax collectors and sinners in Levi's house. In Luke, Jesus responds to this complaint in language that is nearly identical to that in Mark:

Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but rather those who are sick.

I did not come (οὐκ ἦλθον) to call the righteous but sinners." (Mk 2:17)

Those who are healthy have no need of a physician, but rather those who are sick. *I have not come* (οὐκ ἐλήλυθα) to call the righteous but sinners *to repentance*.
(Lk 5:32)

Through this brief interchange Jesus indicates that his inclusive table fellowship departs from what, in Luke's view, is a Pharisaic practice of constructing or maintaining religious boundaries through selective commensality.³² The moral nature of the accusation against Jesus and the fact that it comes from Pharisees situates their

³² What the Pharisees may have done historically is a different matter from what Luke thinks they did. On the grounds of earlier Christian tradition, he believes at least that they refrained from eating with certain "sinners." From Gal 2:12 it is evident that some early Jewish Christians withheld table fellowship from gentile Christians, and Acts 10:28, 11:3 may reflect a broader reticence in some Jewish circles to eat with gentiles, as in Jub. 2:16 and Jos. Asen. 7:1.

complaint not so much in the honor culture of Greco-Roman Palestine (though the issue of honor at the table is not absent in Luke—see 14:8-11) but in the concern in Pharisaic Judaism for a faithful social embodiment of Jewish identity. However, it is not clear from the accusation in Lk 5:30 precisely why the Pharisees take offense at Jesus' table practice.³³ Prior to Luke, Mark presented Jesus' table fellowship as a controversial social practice that extended the offer of "healing" to those identified as "sinners and tax collectors."³⁴ The language of transformation implicit in Mark's metaphor of a physician's healing is made explicit in Luke's statement that the sinners in Jesus' company are to be brought "to repentance." Luke's subtle shift to the perfect verbal form ἐλήλυθα may be a stylistic improvement over Mark's aorist, but the change also corresponds to an important feature of Luke's christology. Jesus' ministry is not for Luke limited to his earthly life; he maintains an active enduring presence in the life of

³³ E.P. Sanders suggests that the historical Pharisees were non-sectarian and did not regard Jews who differed with their own embodiment of the food laws as "heinous transgressors" (*Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* [London: SCM Press, 1990], 242). Although he argues that the Pharisees did not (and could not) exclude "sinners" from Jewish religious life, Sanders judges that the Pharisees "probably did not eat with the ordinary people, and trade with them was also under restraints...The Pharisees had the feeling of being stricter and holier than most, but not that of being the only true Israel" (*Jewish Law*, 240). This image of contact with and distinction from "ordinary people" fits with the scenes of controversy in Luke.

³⁴ Levi is no longer a tax collector after the encounter at 5:28 (cf. Mk 2:14).

the church (cf. Acts 9:5, 16:7, 22:18). With these two changes it is clear that while Luke recounts a saying in the life of Jesus, the saying has been inflected to indicate its ongoing significance for the church, through which Jesus continues to offer repentance to sinners.

Luke's addition of the phrase "to repentance" at 5:32 has the additional effect of recasting what is meant by the statement that Jesus has not come to call the righteous. Whereas the saying of Jesus at Mk 2:17 could be read as erecting firm opposition between sinners, with whom Jesus is concerned, and the righteous Pharisees, with whom he is not, the Lukan form of the saying explicitly indicates that sinners must change—that is, that they must become righteous. Luke's earlier designation of Zachariah and Elizabeth as "righteous" through their "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord" (1:6), together with Gabriel's announcement that God's eschatological fidelity to Israel would involve turning the unfaithful in Israel "to the wisdom of the righteous" (1:17), shows that Luke stands within the biblical and early Christian tradition of regarding as righteous those who do what is right (e.g. Ezek 18:5, cf. 1Jn 3:7). The Pauline idea of universal sinfulness and the universal need for grace (e.g. Rom 3:23-24) is present in Luke's thought (see Acts 5:31, cf. 17:30), but it has not been pressed so as to undermine the basic conviction that Jews who keep God's commandments are to be considered righteous by their faithfulness prior to any response to the Christian gospel.

The offer of repentance to sinners is a central aspect of the apostles' commission after Jesus' resurrection (cf. Lk 24:47; Acts 2:38; 11:18; 20:21), but it is significant that Luke has amplified in his gospel the motif of Jesus' presence at the table of sinners. The saying at Lk 7:34 (cf. Mt 11:19) that the Son of Man is derided as "a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners" suggests a setting of commensality with the irreligious similar to that portrayed in Lk 5:30. The answer to this charge in Luke is an embodied answer: "Wisdom is vindicated by all her *children*" (7:35; cf. "*deeds*" at Mt 11:19). The children of wisdom, in Luke's logic, are the members of the community in which Jesus' aim to bring sinners to repentance has been successful, individuals such as Zacchaeus (cf. 19:8-9). Luke's redaction of this saying thus refers not simply to the ministry of Jesus' earthly life but anticipates the shape of the enduring community of the church, within which the wisdom of association with sinners is vindicated by their repentance.

The ecclesial relevance of such arguments is evident in Luke's devotion of an entire chapter of parables to answering the complaint of Pharisees and scribes, grumbled again at Lk 15:2, that "this man welcomes sinners and eats with them."³⁵ While the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son all allude to the restoration of lost sinners (15:7, 10, 21-22), the parable of the prodigal develops this concern through

³⁵ The same complaint is voiced by the *crowds* upon Jesus' entrance into Zacchaeus's house for the reason that "he has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner" (Lk 19:7).

an explicit contrast between the sinful and repentant younger brother and the faithful older brother. Through this contrast of morally different persons, together with the motif of a refusal to join a celebratory meal (15:23-28), the parable presents in narrative form the essential elements of the complaint in 15:2 that Jesus eats with sinners. On the level of Luke's narrative, the parable of the lost son thus functions to provide Jesus' answer to the Pharisees and scribes about his own table practice. But there is also good reason to suppose that this parable had a persuasive purpose in Luke's own time.

Sanders argues cogently that the distinctive portrait of the Pharisees in Luke-Acts is intelligible if the Pharisees are understood to prefigure Jewish Christians in Luke's community. According to Sanders, the redactional tendency with regard to the Pharisees in Luke's gospel is particularly related to exposing the errors of their halakha, which creates an impediment to their fellowship with "sinners" who do not share their tradition.³⁶ From the picture of the early church in Acts, it appears that there was substantial opposition in Luke's community to fellowship between Jewish and gentile Christians and that this opposition came from Jewish Christian segment of the early church (so Acts 10:28, 11:3, 15:5; cf. 6:1; 21:20-21). Sanders connects this insight in Luke's shaping of the gospel tradition to the concern to legitimate associations between gentile and Jewish Christians in Acts, and he concludes:

³⁶ Jack T. Sanders, "The Pharisees in Luke-Acts," in *The Living Text: Essays in Honor of Ernest W. Sanders*, ed. Dennis E. Groh and Robert Jewett (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 151-57.

Jesus' Pharisaic opponents in the Gospel *stand for* traditionally Jewish Christians. It thus would appear that, in Luke's opinion, there were those in the early Jewish church who opposed accepting Gentiles...and insisted rather on maintaining Pharisaic *halakha*.³⁷

This discovery of the relation of Luke's redactional *Tendenz* to Luke's socio-historical situation as reflected in the story of Act is astute.³⁸ As Sanders recognizes, however, the discovery raises a serious question. If the portrait of the Pharisees and their complaints in the gospel anticipates conflicts that are *within* the early church, what is the import of the harsh judgements against these Pharisees, who "neglect justice and the love of God" (11:42) "reject the purposes of God for themselves" (7:30), are "lovers of money" (16:14), and are generally self-righteous (18:9-14)? For Sanders, Luke's identification of these Pharisees with the Jewish Christians of his own day means that "even those Pharisees who became Christians are without hope of salvation...their situation appears hopeless."³⁹

³⁷ Sanders, "Pharisees," 159-60, emphasis original.

³⁸ Tyson had earlier made a similar observation in "The Opposition to Jesus in the Gospel of Luke," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 5 (1978), 144-50.

³⁹ Sanders, "Pharisees," 182.

At this point it is necessary to raise two strong objections to Sanders's conclusion. The first is historical in nature and was made already in the previous chapter with regard to the relation of Lk 4:16-30 to Luke's social situation: one cannot neatly divide Jewish Christians from non-Christian Jews over the issue of relations with gentiles. Jews who were Christians lived, in many cases, in close contact with Jews who were not,⁴⁰ and the concern to demarcate Jewish identity did not, at least according to Acts, disappear when Jews became Christians. In view of the complexity of the social history of early Jewish Christianity and the communal relations displayed in Acts, which includes lines of connection between Jewish Christians like Paul and non-Christian Jewish Pharisees (so Acts 23:6-9), Sanders' wooden equation of Pharisees in Luke's gospel with Jewish Christians in Luke's day needs to be softened and expanded: the presentation of Pharisees in the gospel anticipates an attitude among Jews of Luke's day toward relations with "sinners," among whom gentiles are likely included (cf. Acts 11:18). Some of these Jews, as the portrayals in Acts suggest, are Christians but some of them, like the Jews from Asia who riot against Paul's alleged breach of a Jew/gentile barrier in the temple (Acts 21:27-28), are not. But if the relation of Pharisees in the gospel to the Jewish Christians of Luke's day is not one of equality but one of similarity, then the denunciations of the former do not necessarily imply the condemnation of the

⁴⁰ This remained true for Paul, a most radical Jewish Christian (cf. 2Cor 11:24).

latter. Instead, the Pharisees in the gospel prefigure the Pharisees in Acts and at the time of Luke. The fact that some of these become Christians indicates that a development and degree of schism has occurred within Pharisaism, as Luke presents it. To regard the invectives of the gospel as perduring through this schism and applying specifically to the Christian element within Pharisaism is thus unwarranted, for with conversion comes, necessarily, a reassessment of one's moral and spiritual state (so Acts 3:19-20).

The second objection to Sanders' argument relates to the rhetorical function of Luke's presentation of the Pharisees. Sanders rightly observes that the Lukan Jesus is critical of Pharisees, whom he regards as guilty of sin, but this observation does not immediately elucidate Luke's rhetorical purpose. There are two very different ways of conceiving the intention behind Luke's portrayal of Jesus' conflict with Pharisees: Jesus may expose their guilt for the sake of correcting them, or he may expose it to utterly condemn them and justify their condemnation by others. The latter option is, for Sanders, the only logical choice. In Jesus' parable of the two sons, Sanders recognizes correctly that the elder brother embodies not only the unwillingness of the Pharisees in the gospel to associate with sinners but also the hesitancy of the Christian Pharisees to associate with gentiles in Acts 15:5 without their full acceptance of Torah.⁴¹ The purpose

⁴¹ Sanders, "Pharisees in Luke-Acts," 179. Sanders overreaches in characterizing the spirit of these Christian Pharisees as "resentful" over the welcome of uncircumcised gentiles into the church. Luke simply presents the content of their halakic position.

of this presentation is thus “to disparage those who keep the commandments and who are not sinners in any traditional sense (Pharisees) while approving repentant sinners.”⁴²

But the function of the “disparagement” of the attitude of the elder brother appears to be to engender a change of heart, for the parable ends with the father’s appeal to the offended brother to abandon his insistence on marking the inferior moral status of his sinful brother, in hopes that he will return to fellowship with his father. The hope for a change of heart among the Pharisees and scribes is embodied in the climactic scene of the parable of the prodigal (which is also the climactic moment in the discourse with the Pharisees and scribes in the sequence of parables of 15:1-32), in which the father departs from the celebratory banquet and goes out to meet the angry protests of the older brother in a spirit of appeal (ὁ δὲ πατήρ αὐτοῦ ἐξελθὼν παρεκάλει αὐτόν, 15:28). If Luke’s concern at this point had been with a negative identity construction of the self-righteous Pharisees, we might imagine the older brother to have been disinherited by an angry father or sold into servitude to repay his younger brother’s debts. But Jesus is here concerned not with retribution but with rapprochement with the older brother: “Son, you are always with me; all that I have is yours” (15:31). The identity of the older brother as a legitimate son of the father is thus affirmed rather than negated, despite the brother’s disavowal of familial connection to his brother and,

⁴² Ibid; cf. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1085.

perhaps, his father (so 15:30), as well as his failure to embrace the father's posture of merciful acceptance. The parable thus marshals all its rhetorical and conceptual force to underscore the emotional appeal for the older brother to go back into the house with the father and welcome the younger son "who was dead and has come to life; who was lost and has been found" (15:32). Contrary to Sanders' reading, therefore, the disparagement of the elder son is intended for his reclamation, not his damnation. If elsewhere Jesus impugns the Pharisees for their failures, here at least he presents them with an implicit offer to understand and join with his practice of welcoming sinners into his fellowship.⁴³ The function of these parables and the narrative of conflict to which they respond is thus not the erection of impermeable boundaries between the wicked Pharisees and the righteous community of Jesus' followers. Instead, the texts appeal for Jesus' companions, both righteous and sinners, to rejoice together with the shepherd, the woman, the father, and the angels of heaven over the mercy of God (15:6-7, 9-10, 32a).

Not only does Jesus, like the father in the parable of the prodigal, invite Pharisees and lawyers to share in the banquet of God's mercy, he also continues, like the father of the parable, to "go out" to them, dining as a guest with Pharisees at their banquets.

⁴³ In view of Jesus' identical offer to sinners and tax collectors, on the one hand, and hesitating Pharisees, on the other, perhaps we should read the statement in Lk 7:35 that "wisdom is justified by *all* her children" as referring to the concord within the early church between members from various moral backgrounds (cf. Acts 1:14, 2:46, 4:32-35; 15:22-25).

Luke alone among the New Testament evangelists portrays Jesus as a guest of Pharisees, and he does so no fewer than three times.⁴⁴ In each instance the setting provides the occasion for Jesus to correct the attitudes of his host, while the sharing of a common meal proves the consistency of Jesus' open table practice as well as the absence of any social ostracism against those with whom he exchanges intimate words of rebuke.

In Lk 7:36-50, the first of these scenes, the home of Simon the Pharisee provides the setting for what elsewhere occurs in the home of Jesus' followers: a woman anoints Jesus' feet and wipes them with her hair (Mk 14:3; cf. Jn 12:3). In Luke's version the woman is "a sinner," and the fact that Jesus permits her to touch him is a scandal to Simon and calls into question whether Jesus is a prophet (Lk 7:39). To this unspoken challenge Jesus responds with the parable of the two debtors, who in the context refers to the woman, who has been forgiven much and loves much, and the Pharisee, who has been forgiven little and therefore loves little (7:44-47). The entire episode takes its point of departure from the charge that Jesus associates too closely with sinners. In this scene, however, Luke develops the portrait of the Pharisees beyond the traditional material he inherits through the contrast between the sinful woman and the Pharisee. The latter is

⁴⁴ The scene in Mk 7:1-13 assumes enough proximity between Jesus and the Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem "gathered to him" (συνάγονται πρὸς αὐτὸν) that they can critique Jesus' disciples' failure to wash their hands prior to eating. However, Mark does not present either the Pharisees or Jesus actually eating in this scene.

not demonized but is shown to be insufficient; he has been forgiven little and therefore loves little. The Pharisee's failure to offer water for Jesus' feet, oil for his head, or a welcoming kiss is contrasted with the welcoming actions of the woman. Through this contrast we observe a distinction between the types of people the two individuals represent and between two modes of living in relation to forgiveness, love, and welcome. Yet these modes are in a relative, rather than absolute tension; the Pharisee "has been forgiven a little bit" (ὀλίγον ἀφίεται, 7:47) rather than summarily rejected. Likewise, the Pharisee understands Jesus' point "a little bit," enough at least to respond well to the question about the meaning of the parable and to receive Jesus' polite commendation: "You have answered correctly" (7:43). In this way the story presents the Pharisee as both an object for and recipient of instruction. He is thus one of the many in Jesus' fellowship who learn from him about the values of the kingdom.

Jesus' strongest words against the Pharisees occur in Lk 11:37-54 when, after accepting an invitation to a Pharisee's house, his host is astonished that Jesus does not wash before eating. The scene is a thorough reworking of the episode in Mk 7:1-23 (cf. Mt 15:1-20).⁴⁵ Luke has retained the Pharisaic astonishment that Jesus does not wash,

⁴⁵ The reference in Luke is not to hand washing, as in Mk 7:3, but to immersion (οὐ πρῶτον ἐβαπτίσθη, v.38), following Mk 7:4, where the Pharisees are said not to eat after returning from the ἀγορά unless they immerse (ἐὰν μὴ βαπτίσωνται). The fact that both Lk 11:39 and Mk 7:4 refer additionally to the immersion of cups underlines Luke's dependence on Mark in this thoroughly rewritten episode.

but he greatly condenses the contrast between ritual and moral purity in Mark, summarizing succinctly the crux of the controversy:

Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You fools! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? So, give for alms those things that are within; and see, everything is clean for you (ἰδοὺ πάντα καθαρὰ ὑμῖν ἐστίν, Lk 11:39-41).

The phrase πάντα καθαρὰ ὑμῖν ἐστίν is not unlike καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα in Mk 7:19 (cf. Rom 14:20). However, in Luke the referent of πάντα is not food, as in Mark, but the “outside” of cup and dish, which are cleansed through the giving of alms. Luke thus modifies Mark’s apparent annulment of the laws of *kashrut* while retaining Jesus’ subjection of ritual to moral purity.⁴⁶ This solution corresponds to the nature of the

⁴⁶ This reading of Mark has been disputed by Menahem Kister (“Law, Morality, and Rhetoric in Some Sayings of Jesus,” in *Studies in Ancient Midrash*, ed. James L. Kugel [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies, 2001], 145-154.) and Yair Furstenburg (“Defilement Penetrating the Body: A New Understanding of Contamination in Mark 7:15,” *NTS* 54 [2008]: 176-200). Daniel Boyarin has taken up this position (*The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ* [New York: The New Press, 2012], 102-128); idem, “Moses and Jesus Against the Pharisees: Or, Why Mark Isn’t (Always) Paul,” in *The Christian Moses: From Philo to the Qur’an*, eds. Janet Timbie and Phillip Rousseau (Washington: Catholic University Press, forthcoming). John Van Maaren presents a clear overview of the exegetical debate between

problem as Luke's Jesus sees it, which is not the cleanliness of dishware or food but of *people* whose Torah practice is primarily a matter of external observances while "inside you are full of greed and wickedness." This charge of Pharisaic hypocrisy (anticipating the explicit statement about the "yeast of the Pharisees" in 12:2) is articulated through a triad of woes, each of which enumerates the Pharisees' failures (11:42-44). They tithe the herbs of their gardens but "neglect justice and the love of God" (11:42), loving instead recognition in the synagogues and marketplaces (11:43). "Unmarked graves," they are hidden sources of impurity for the people, yeast that must be guarded against (11:44; cf. 12:1).⁴⁷

Furstenburg's position and the traditional view that Mark's Jesus abrogated the laws of *kashrut* ("Does Mark's Jesus Abrogate Torah? Jesus' Purity Logion and its Illustration in Mark 7:15-23," *JJMJS* 4 [2017]: 21-41). For a brief rebuttal of this viewpoint, see Joel Marcus, "Mark: Interpreter of Paul," in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part II: For and Against Pauline Influence*, eds. Eve-Marie Becker, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, Mogens Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 45-49. Of central importance to this debate is the recently recovered understanding of "morality" as a *purity* category in ancient Judaism; on this see Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: OUP, 2004).

⁴⁷ The comment "these you should have done without neglecting those" (11:42) shows that Luke is concerned not to allow the contrast between ritual and moral Torah praxis to be understood as approving the neglect of the laws of tithing. Similarly, the charge that the Pharisees are "unmarked graves" (11:44) presupposes a concern with avoiding corpse impurity—a concern that Luke feels no need to explain to his

A lawyer's complaint that Jesus' rebukes insult lawyers as well triggers another triad of woes that highlights the failure of this group with regard to the law. This failure consists in the imposition of "burdens hard to bear" upon others while failing to help with those burdens themselves (11:46).⁴⁸ As a result of this mistaken preoccupation with legislating Torah observance, the lawyers have "taken away the key of knowledge" and kept both themselves and others from entering into knowledge of the Torah. For Luke, the message of the Torah is distorted apart from the lens provided by prophets (cf. Acts 26:27), and the lawyers' failure to exhibit an authentic concern for the welfare of the people demonstrates that they actually stand opposed to the prophetic message, even though they profess their allegiance to the prophets through the building of their tombs. Ironically, the act of building the prophets' tombs identifies the lawyers as the descendants of those who kill the prophets (11:47-48).

readers (contrast the editorial comment in Mk 7:3-4 explaining Pharisaic practice to an ostensibly ignorant reader). For a discussion of Luke's halakic concerns in this passage see Oliver, *Torah Praxis*, 294-303.

⁴⁸ On its own, the statement ἐνὶ τῶν δακτύλων ὑμῶν οὐ προσψάυετε τοῖς φορτίοις could simply mean that the lawyers do not lift a finger to touch the burdens they impose. But the claim in 11:46 that the lawyers have painfully increased others' burdens suggests that Jesus charges them with an oppressive Torah teaching, not simply with hypocrisy. So Fitzmyer, *Luke* 2:945-6.

Following this scathing condemnation, the lawyers recede slightly from Jesus' field of vision, and the focus shifts to "this generation." The statement in 11:49-50 that "the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' so that this generation may be charged with the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world" describes in a brief apocalyptic summary the persecution of God's messengers in both Israelite and early Christian history (so "prophets and apostles") as taking place within the divine plan. Over against these prophets and apostles there have perennially stood those who persecute and kill them, and the fact that all of this comes to a head in "this generation" reveals that the lawyers, in their failure to embody the message of the prophets, which is realized in Jesus, typify both "this generation" and the guilty strain within Israel's history of prophecy and its rejection. The bifurcation of Israel into the dual genealogies of those who listen to the prophets and those who persecute them is a matter about which Luke has more to say elsewhere (note the contrast in Lk 6:23, 26; cf. Acts 3:25, 7:52), but on this particular evening the dinner party is "terribly incited" and Jesus departs, to the probable relief of his hosts.

Incredibly, despite this extreme denunciation of his dinner hosts in Lk 11:37-54, Jesus is invited *yet again* to have dinner on a subsequent Sabbath "at the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees" (Lk 14:1). Although the critical reader might suspect a disingenuous setup by the Pharisees on the basis of 11:53-54, there is no indication of

any conspiracy. The Pharisaic leaders simply watch closely to see whether Jesus will heal on the Sabbath and are silent when he does so (14:1, 6). Their muted response suggests that they still disapprove of Jesus' Sabbath healing, but they are not impelled to violence or even argument. Instead, Jesus is hosted for a meal in which he consistently instructs those present about "the kingdom of God" through the motif of appropriate table manners (cf. 14:15). Absurd as this may seem, given the previous dinner episode, Jesus proceeds to instruct the leader of the Pharisees and his guests about humility, generosity, and the right way to give and receive hospitality. Seeing that the Pharisee's guests—presumably other Pharisees, but perhaps including Jesus' disciples and others as well—take the places of honor at the table, Jesus offers a parable that corresponds nearly exactly to the setting in which he gives it. In the parable, however, the host reevaluates the seating arrangement, enacting socially the prophetic inversion of the Lukan canticles. Jesus' listeners are thus urged to choose low places so that they might be elevated, rather than demoted; for "everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted" (14:11).

The future time of this inversion should be understood in light of what comes next. Following the saying in 14:11, Jesus gives instructions on how the leader of the Pharisees should alter his practice of table fellowship. Instead of inviting those within his social circle, in which reciprocity would naturally be practiced, he should invite only those who cannot repay him—the poor, crippled, lame, and blind (14:12-14). This

unidirectional generosity⁴⁹ will result in *eschatological* blessing: “You will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous” (14:14). In light of this eschatological event, the saying in 14:11 should be understood to refer likewise to the final judgment at which God, the host of the eschatological banquet, will exalt those who humble themselves and extend mercy to the poor. The promise of repayment at the eschaton for good done to the poor is clearly positive: “You will be blessed” (μακάριος ἔσση, 14:14). In view of the sharp denunciations of the Pharisees and lawyers in 11:37-54, it is remarkable that in this distinctly Lukan scene a leader of the Pharisees is instructed about how he may obtain eschatological blessing at the last judgment. Although Luke has told us earlier that the Pharisees “rejected God’s purpose for themselves” by refusing to be baptized by John (7:30), Jesus doesn’t seem to be finished instructing them in the path to eternal life.

Jesus’ eschatological instruction to Pharisees in Lk 14 carries with it an important implication for the posture of the Lukan Jesus toward the Pharisees prior to the “resurrection of the righteous.” The structure of command and promised reward—“invite the poor...and you will be blessed...you will be repaid” (14:13-14)—includes a protasis that requires the Pharisees and their associates to amend their present lives. The same is true for the statement in 14:11 that “the one who humbles himself will be

⁴⁹ Jesus’ ethic here diverges from the usual *do ut des* principle of giving that was common in Hellenistic culture and which, in some measure, shaped Jewish modes of social benefaction. See John Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 24-45.

exalted.” Exaltation at the future judgment requires humility now. The Pharisees are therefore being called to a life of discipleship that leads to eschatological blessing. The positive portrayal of Pharisees in Acts (Acts 5:33-39; 23:6-9) and the explicit indication in Acts 15:5 that some Pharisees were members of the early church (a fact Luke relates despite their initial belief that gentile Christians were obligated to keep the Torah, a position that Luke repudiates) confirms this reading of Lk 14: some of the Pharisees, according to Luke, actually became disciples.

The dinner conversation continues with the parable of the rejected banquet, which Jesus tells in response to a dinner guest’s pious exclamation, “Blessed is anyone who eats bread in the kingdom of God!” (14:15). This statement introduces the topic of who will sit at the table in God’s kingdom, which Jesus takes up in an extended parable that illustrates the inversion involved in Luke’s theological vision (cf. 1:53; 6:21, 25; 16:25). A man prepares a large banquet, but when his initial invitations are all politely declined he sends his slaves to gather the outcasts in the city and beyond, “so that my house may be filled” (14:23). The motif of a banquet, as we have seen, is a potent metaphor for an eschatological reality (“the kingdom of God,” v.15) that also patterns life in the present. In view of the correlation in vv. 7-14 between table practice in the present life and judgment/reward at the eschaton, the parable of the rejected banquet presents an image of a surprising eschatological fellowship and a paradigm for the present life. Consequently, the contrast between those who join the feast and those who

decline serves as both an eschatological warning and a recognition of the observable division that Jesus' table fellowship creates in Israel. Those who decline the invitation are not thoroughly described; they are simply said to own fields (v.18) and oxen (v.19) and to be married (v.20). Apparently, they are all wealthy and well fed enough that they feel free to decline a free meal. In contrast, the list of those who receive the second invitation is headed by "the poor" and includes various persons whose disabilities require them to beg for their living (cf. Lk 18:35, Acts 3:2). Here, as elsewhere, we observe Luke's special concern to contrast the poor, whom God welcomes, and the rich who exclude themselves from God's kingdom (cf. 16:19-31, 18:24).⁵⁰ Since this parable juxtaposes different groups who relate differently to the table of in God's kingdom, it is a natural place to consider the question of Luke's presentation of various identities.

While the invitation to the meal is extended broadly, there are some who do not respond to it, as the final statement of the scene indicates: "I say to you that none of those men who were invited will taste my meal" (14:24). Although the NRSV, following a number of English translations, punctuates this verse as the final word of the master of the house to his servant, this cannot be the meaning as it was written by Luke. The plural addressee in the phrase "I say to you (λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι)" envisions a collective audience, whereas the master in the parable only ever addresses a single servant (so

⁵⁰ A similar story appears in Mt 22:1-14, but, despite key similarities, the context and the form of the Matthean story are notably different.

14:17, 21-23). Moreover, the same phrase with the conjunction γάρ normally transitions from one mode of speech to another in Luke (so 3:8, 10:24, 22:16, 37) and is otherwise absent in Lukan parables. The statement is thus not part of the parable but articulates Jesus' summary of its meaning to the dinner audience. It is the final word spoken by Jesus as the guest of Pharisees: "None of those invited will taste *my* meal." If Jesus claims ownership of the table "in the kingdom of God" (cf. 14:15), who are the people who will *not* be present? Sanders claims,

Almost all commentators take these to stand, for Luke, for the Jews who reject the gospel, and the point seems so obvious that it needs no further labouring....The Jews, to whom the gospel first came, turned it down, and so God sent the gospel to others, i.e., to Gentiles.⁵¹

Bovon's conclusion is similar, though less totalizing: those who exclude themselves are "recalcitrant Israel," i.e. those from among the Jews who reject the gospel.⁵² Here, however, we may perhaps observe the effect of reading Luke's story through the lens of supercessionist theology. As it turns out, the parable and its interpretation are entirely devoid of any ethnic references, whether to Jews or gentiles. For Luke Timothy Johnson,

⁵¹ Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts*, 196.

⁵² Bovon, *Luke 2*, 374.

the reference is therefore not to “the Jews” or to “recalcitrant Israel” but specifically to the Pharisees.⁵³ But while Luke could easily have written, “None of *you Pharisees* will taste my dinner,” he instead presents Jesus speaking to his Pharisaic audience about “those men” (τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκεῖνων). If we follow the referent of the pronoun, we find that those who are excluded are those who opt not to accept the master’s invitation, who were instead occupied with other things.

“Those men” are the rich, who are too preoccupied with their own lifestyle to be bothered about an invitation. These are contrasted to “the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame,” and others occupying “roads and hedges” (14:23)—evidently the homeless. The different types of receptivity indicated in these different social statuses is parallel to the different types of soil in the parable of the sower, in which Jesus relays the fate of the seed that fell among thorns, which was “choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life” (8:14). The point of both parables is to draw attention to the appropriate response Jesus’ presence should elicit from his listeners. And there is a reason that Jesus speaks this warning in the presence of Pharisees. Jesus has already indicated that the Pharisees are preoccupied with public status and honor instead of the love of God (11:42-43), and Luke himself comments that the Pharisees “were lovers of money” (16:14). Fitzmyer thus rightly observes that, in the parable of the banquet, “a

⁵³ Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, SP 3 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 232.

mirror is held up before the lawyers and Pharisees in which they can see that they are regarding something else as more important than God's invitation offered in Jesus' preaching."⁵⁴ The Pharisees are thus especially, but perhaps not uniquely, within the scope of the parable's critique. Yet the fact that Jesus continues to instruct them at such length, despite the presence of tension, conflict, and suspicion, suggests that, "the Lucan Jesus is seen desperately trying to coax his contemporaries into a proper understanding of his role as kingdom-preacher."⁵⁵

While these scenes of eating with Pharisees present Jesus as desiring to cultivate among the Pharisees the ethics of the kingdom of God, Luke does not permit the conclusion that simply eating with Jesus and learning from him is sufficient, and there is thus no general approval of Pharisees as a group in these scenes. For Luke, those who are righteous are those who "hear the word of God and do it" (8:21). Luke thus appears to answer affirmatively the question asked of Jesus, "Will only a few be saved" (13:23)?⁵⁶ The question is put to Jesus while he is on the road to Jerusalem by an unnamed member of the large crowds gathered around him (cf. 14:25), and Jesus urges the enquirer, "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for, many, I tell you, will try to enter

⁵⁴ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1054.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:1053.

⁵⁶ Here, as in the parable of the banquet discussed above, the language resonates with that of Mt 22:1-14, though the material has been shaped differently by the two evangelists.

and will not be able" (13:24). The question of the eschatological future is thus answered again with the image of entering a home and sitting at table "in the kingdom of God" (13:25, 30; cf. 14:15, 21). Those denied entrance by the master of the house will protest, "We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets." (13:26). The reply to this claim echoes the words of Ps 6:9, "Depart from me, all workers of unrighteousness!" (13:27). In light of this statement, eating and drinking with Jesus and listening to his teaching may be a prerequisite for sharing his eschatological banquet, but such encounters must lead to the life of discipleship in the terms Jesus demands. If the failure to do *that*, to practice righteousness in the mode specified by Jesus' teaching, that will lead to judgment against the crowds:

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you thrown out. They will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God. (Lk 13:28-29)

Joachim Jeremias understands this saying, which occurs in a similar form at Mt 8:11-12, as a prediction by the historical Jesus of the inclusion of gentiles in God's

eschatological salvation.⁵⁷ For Jeremias, these gentiles are contrasted with the “sons of the kingdom” who can be none other than the nation of Israel, whose exclusion is predicted.⁵⁸ Dale Allison has challenged Jeremias’ reading, however, arguing that those who come from the ends of the earth to the table of the patriarchs are Diaspora Jews.⁵⁹ Among Allison’s several cogent points of critique are his observation that the Matthean version of the saying may not represent its original form (particularly the statement that the “sons of the kingdom” will be cast out) or its original context (particularly the setting in the story of the faith of the gentile centurion in Mt 8:5-10, from which it is detached in Luke).⁶⁰ Since the passage makes no explicit reference to gentiles but only to those who come “from east and west,” Allison examines this language closely within the literature of early Judaism, concluding that Jesus’ reference most likely referred to the inclusion of the scattered Jews of the Diaspora and the exclusion of his Palestinian opponents.⁶¹ Accordingly, those who are relegated to outer darkness are only some Jews, not “the Jews” or “Israel.” Allison’s arguments against Jeremias are largely appreciated by

⁵⁷ Joachim Jeremias, *Jesus’ Promise to the Nations*, trans. S.H. Hooke, SBT 24 (London: SCM, 1958), 70.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 51. Likewise, for Sanders, Lk 13:28-30 means, “the Jews are out and the Gentiles in” (*Jews in Luke Acts*, 192).

⁵⁹ Dale C. Allison, “Who Will Come from East and West? Observations on Matt. 8:11-12 – Luke 13:28-29,” *IBS* 11 (1989) 158-70.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 159, 165.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 165-67.

Michael Bird, but Bird takes issue with the claim that the reference to those who come from east and west refers exclusively to the regathering of the Diaspora. Citing, among several texts, Tob 14:5-7, Bird argues that “the motifs of the return of the Diaspora and of the pilgrimage of the gentiles were umbilically linked in Israel’s sacred traditions and second-temple literature,” and, accordingly, the saying of Jesus may include both Diaspora Jews and gentiles.⁶² Bird’s claim about the linkage of the pilgrimage of gentiles and the return of the Diaspora is overgeneralized, but the frequency of the connection of these two themes counts against Allison’s claim that gentiles are nowhere in view in a reference to those streaming from the corners of the earth. Bird’s hybrid view that those who come from east and west includes both gentiles and Diaspora Jews thus appears to be the better interpretation of the saying in its earliest form and with regard to its earliest function.

Bird’s view also provides a reasonable interpretation of the meaning of the passage as it stands in Luke’s gospel. While Luke portrays the gathering of “devout Jews from every nation under heaven” to hear the apostles preach the gospel (Acts 2:5-12), he also understands the gentile mission as a pilgrimage of gentiles who “seek the Lord” in coordination with the rebuilding of the tent of David (Acts 15:16-17; cf. Amos 9:11-12 LXX). Even if these two events that Bird identifies as coordinated in some Jewish

⁶² Michael F. Bird, “Who Comes from the East and the West? Lk 13.28-29/Matt 8.11-12 and the Historical Jesus,” *NTS* 52 (2006): 441-457, 453.

literature were not explicitly coordinated in Acts, Peter the Jew and Cornelius the gentile are explicitly said to have eaten together (Acts 11:3) following the outpouring of the Spirit. In view of this scene, it is difficult to read Jesus' prediction that people will come from distant lands and eat in the kingdom of God without thinking of gentiles.

But the table is not *only* for gentiles. In Luke, this saying about table fellowship in the kingdom of God is immediately followed by another that resumes this motif of reversal without specifying clearly who is out and who is in: "Look, some who are presently last will be first, and some who are presently first will be last" (ἰδοὺ εἰσὶν ἔσχατοι οἱ ἔσονται πρῶτοι καὶ εἰσὶν πρῶτοι οἱ ἔσονται ἔσχατοι, 13:30). While this statement contains a striking reversal, it lacks a thoroughgoing opposition between the first and the last, for it allows that some who are currently first may still be first in the kingdom of God, while some who are currently last may still be last. Luke, like Paul, may have thought that the gospel was "for the Jew first" (Rom 1:16), for Jesus' saying, even if it applies to the status of some Jews and some gentiles, does not thoroughly demote Jewish privilege. Rather, it expresses the pathos that some who see Jesus in the flesh and are the first to hear his words ("you," 13:28), will nevertheless be cast out. But the hour of reckoning has not yet come, and the crowd stands before Jesus like those who stand outside the door of the householder in 13:25. Some will enter, and some will not. While we, like the interrogator in 13:23, may wish to know precisely who will be saved, Jesus' response is focused not on theological precision but on existential demand:

“Strive to enter!” (13:24). It would seem that Luke thought this to be an answer appropriate to his purposes.

3.5 Controversies over Fasting and Prayer

Directly following the controversy over eating with sinners at 5:30 is a controversial question about fasting. The disciples of John the Baptist and of the Pharisees fast frequently, while Jesus’ disciples eat and drink (5:33). Luke alone among the gospels frames this charge as a continuation of the previous dialogue with “the Pharisees and their scribes.”⁶³ This adjustment thus extends Jesus’ instruction of the Pharisees, which comes, as in the source at Mk 2:18-22, in the form of three succinct parables. Jesus’ disciples, in contrast to those of John and the Pharisees, are like the joyful attendants of a wedding party who cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them (5:34). They are like a new cloth that cannot not stitched into an old garment, new wine that cannot be contained by old wineskins.

⁶³ The possessive pronoun in the phrase καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν here subsumes these scribes within the group of Pharisees. The clause at Lk 5:33a lacks an explicit subject, so that “Pharisees and their scribes” in 5:30 becomes the inferred subject. In Mk 2:18 there is a narrative break between the discussion of Jesus’ table practice and his disciples’ failure to fast, with John’s disciples joining in the latter question. At Mt 9:14 the question about fasting comes only from John’s disciples.

As the controversy that precipitates Jesus' teaching is not about Jesus but about his disciples, these parables appear to have an ecclesial significance. Yet the nature of their function in Luke is easily misunderstood. Bovon understands the distinction between fasting practices to reify a boundary between Jewish and Christian communities: "Behind Luke's redaction...is the *Christian* community's critique of *Jewish* practice... Probably for Luke, the way of life introduced by Jesus is so new that one cannot simultaneously live as a Jew and as a Christian."⁶⁴ However, the distinction between old and new in these scenes is not as absolute as Bovon claims. Jesus' first parable, which answers most directly to the question about fasting, employs an image of a wedding banquet that shows fasting to be an act that is appropriate for some situations and inappropriate for others. Jesus's disciples, like the friends of a bridegroom, do not need to fast in a moment of celebration, "but the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and they will fast in *those days*" (ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις, 5:35). Luke's use of the plural in this statement (contrast Mk 2:20, ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ), suggests that he envisions the extended period of the church's life, in which fasting was practiced (Acts 13:2, 14:23), as it was also by non-Christian Jews before and after the birth of the Christian movement (cf. Mt 6:16; Did. 8.1). Since Jesus here envisions his followers eventually sharing in the same practices as the disciples of John and the

⁶⁴ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 192-93, emphasis original. Fitzmyer likewise sees these parables as indicating the basic "incompatibility" between the old and new ways of life (*Luke*, 1:596-97).

Pharisees, a *fundamental* contrast between the two ways of life hardly seems to be in view. Rather, Jesus expects an eventual development in the religious practice of his disciples, after which they will modify their current practice.

A temporal development is implicit also in the two subsequent parables. The reason one does not use a new piece of cloth to patch an old garment is that the new cloth still needs to shrink, while the old has already done so (so Mk 2:21, explicitly). Likewise, new wine goes through a fermenting process that, if put into a rigid skin, will result in its rupture.⁶⁵ Although Bovon understands the new/old contrast in vv.36-38 to have an “independent meaning” from the parable of the bridegroom in v.36, the parables are, in fact, united by Jesus’ underlying recognition of inevitable development within the community of his followers. The point of connecting these parables is to illustrate the *temporary* incompatibility between the old and new ways of approaching religious observance. It is not, as Bovon suggests, a means of indicating a fundamental contrast between a Christian way of life and non-Christian Jewish alternatives. Rather, 5:36-38 helps to clarify the question at stake in 5:33-35, emphasizing the temporary nature of the disciples’ distinctive ethic.

Lk 5:37-38 includes evocative sayings whose ecclesial significance probably cannot be confined to fasting. The contrast between old and new is potent, for the

⁶⁵ So Bovon, *Luke 1*, 193.

disciples are part of the new movement that Jesus authorizes. But is this newness to be understood over against Judaism? From the perspective of the 21st century, this meaning may appear obvious. But in Luke's setting, the disciples of John, who are mentioned first in 5:33, and those of the Pharisees probably do not represent all Jews but rather these particular Jewish groups, which were probably the nearest to Luke's own community. Both groups, in fact, have members who join the Christian movement (Acts 15:5, 18:25, 19:1-7), and we may imagine that conversion happened in the other direction as well (as is suggested by the admission of doubt about Jesus' identity among John's disciples at Lk 7:18-20, cf. Mt 11:2-3). Undoubtedly there were differences of practice among these groups, and those differences likely resulted in conflicts like the one in Lk 5:33. Since the Jewish communities of discipleship around the Pharisees and John existed prior to the Jesus movement, it would be reasonable, from Luke's perspective, to think of their modes of religious practice as participating in the old ways in contrast to what was new in his community. Nevertheless, what Jesus says about the disciples' future acceptance of the practice of fasting in 5:33-35 suggests that the life of the church itself will be marked by a discernible development. It will be possible, "in those days," to speak of the "old" days of the church in contrast to its newer developments. Luke's characters in fact reflect explicitly at several points on the earlier phases of their community life (so Acts 1:21-22; ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων, Acts 15:7). The language of newness may thus have helped to account for developments that were internal to Luke's

Christian community as its practices became both differentiated from and closely parallel to other forms of Jewish praxis.

Luke alone finishes this episode with the statement that the new wine does not suit everyone's taste: "No one after drinking the old desires the new, for he says, 'The old is good'" (5:39). Within the church, Luke makes it clear that some Jewish members preferred the praxis of an earlier way of life; Jewish Christians in Jerusalem resist table fellowship with gentiles (Acts 11:3; cf. 10:28), and Christian Pharisees seek to impose circumcision and Torah observance upon gentile Christian converts (Acts 15:5). Behind the attempts of Jewish Christians to impose such practices on gentiles was, we may assume, the basic conviction that *kashrut*, circumcision, and law observance generally were religiously valuable practices. Like Jesus, who does not deny the inherent value of fasting, Luke does not denounce these forms of Jewish piety *per se*, but he is concerned that gentile Christians not be forced to observe them. This concern to prevent the *forcing* of the old ways upon new developments, a concern that does not lead to a denunciation of the old, may be glimpsed in Luke's modification of the parable of the new and old garments. In 5:36, he writes "No one tears a piece from a new garment in order to attach it to a new garment, otherwise *the new garment will be torn*, and the piece from the new *will not agree with* the old." In Mk 2:21, the concern is the danger the new garment poses to the integrity of the old one ("the new pulls away from the old, and a worse tear occurs"), but Luke is concerned with the possibility of damage to what is new. If the

parable has a meaning beyond the question of fasting, the most likely one in Luke's context is that the author desires to shield the gentile church from the restrictions of some Jewish Christians. The statement that the old and new fabrics "will not agree" (ὀ συμφωνήσει) utilizes the language of *verbal* dispute, further suggesting the ecclesiological significance of the passage. The Lukan Jesus recognizes those who prefer the old wine to the new, but he seeks, like the apostles in the later church, to prevent their practices from being *forced* upon those for whom they are not suitable (thus Lk 5:34: μὴ δύνασθε ... ποιῆσαι νηστεύσαι; contrast μὴ δύνανται ... νηστεύειν, Mk 2:19).⁶⁶

While Luke develops the Markan tradition of Jesus' disputes with opponents over his disciples' failure to fast, he is unique among the evangelists in presenting the Pharisees as complaining that Jesus' disciples do not *pray* as theirs and John's do (καὶ δεήσεις ποιοῦνται, 5:33). This brief insertion into the Markan episode anticipates a later contrast between the kind of praying done by the Pharisees and the mode of prayer Jesus himself commends. In Lk 18:9-14 Jesus tells a parable in which the prayer of a Pharisee is contrasted with that of a tax collector. The tax collector, averting his eyes from heaven, simply prays, "God have mercy on me a sinner" (18:13), while the Pharisee's self-congratulatory prayer extols his own status while denigrating that of

⁶⁶ Bovon rightly observes that 5:34 means "You could not force them to fast," but instead of recognizing behind this statement an attempt by some in the community to exert religious control, he regards it as a Christian critique of a Jewish practice (*Luke 1*, 192).

others: “O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity” (18:11; cf. 16:15).

Sanders rightly observes that this prayer functions as a foil to the humble petition of the tax collector, but the claim that the Pharisee is portrayed as “odious” obscures through caricature the rhetorical purpose which Luke clearly ascribes to Jesus’ parable: “He also told this parable *to some who trusted in themselves* that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt” (18:9).⁶⁷ That is, to Pharisees who misperceived themselves and their relation to others, Jesus tells a story about an obviously self-righteous Pharisee and his error. His purpose, at least on the level of Luke’s story, is the correction of the addressees.

Sanders is correct, however, to observe in the Pharisee’s claim to distinctiveness a prefiguring of the viewpoint of Christian Pharisees in Acts 15:5 that those who are justified before God should not live like “the rest of humanity” but should instead keep the covenant of Torah God has commanded. But if Luke has something to say in this parable to Christian Pharisees regarding their need to accept those gentiles who turn to God through repentance and faith (cf. Acts 11:18), it is hardly evident that his point is that these Christian Pharisees are going to hell.⁶⁸ Rather, in this uniquely Lukan parable,

⁶⁷ See Sanders, “Pharisees,” 179-181, referring to the characterization of the Pharisee as “odious” in C.G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2nd Ed, (London: Macmillan, 1927), 2:557, a characterization that Sanders claims is “universally recognized” (179, n.82).

⁶⁸ So Sanders, “Pharisees,” 182.

as in the discussion with Simon the Pharisee, Jesus dramatically contrasts a repentant sinner with a Pharisee for the explicit purpose of instructing the proud that “all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted” (18:14). The rhetorical contrast between the contrite sinner and the self-righteous Pharisees has the goal of reorienting the attitudes of Luke’s listeners and is consistent with the saying of Simeon that the Jesus is “appointed for the falling and rising of many in Israel...so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed” (2:34-35).

3.6 Conclusion

The present chapter has surveyed the forms in which Luke’s gospel preserves both the challenges to Jesus from his religious contemporaries and Jesus’ extended and various rebuttals of those challenges. We have seen that, although Jesus utters strong words of rebuke, the form of these encounters with opponents and the sayings they contain do not support the conclusion that Jesus in Luke’s gospel univocally announces the damnation of his opponents *en bloc*. The Pharisees oppose Jesus and hold to a form of Torah observance that neglects what in Luke’s view is most important. Jesus utters solemn woes against them, their associates, and their practices, and he urges others to beware of their hypocrisy. But rather than distancing himself from them, he maintains a prophetic presence, joining them time and again at table and continuing to teach them his vision of the kingdom of God. In light of these extended scenes of instruction of

Pharisees about what we might reasonably call their need for *repentance*, we should perhaps reevaluate how they figure in the duality of the Lukan form of Jesus' saying at 5:32. The statement that Jesus' has not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance functions, on one level, to justify Jesus' association with those who were not Pharisees and to articulate the logic of that association. But the statement that Jesus has not come for the righteous does not imply that Jesus agrees with the distinction drawn by the Pharisees between "tax collectors and sinners," on the one hand, and themselves, on the other. While Luke agrees with the Pharisees that righteousness consists in the keeping of the commandments (cf. 1:6), Jesus consistently confronts the Pharisees with their failure to embody Torah as fully as they proclaim it. By redirecting the Pharisees and their associates to the pressing realities of human need (11:41, 46), by focusing Torah praxis on "justice and the love of God" (11:42), and by commending a posture of humility (14:7-11, 18:9-14), Jesus calls the Pharisees to repentance. But if this is so, then according to the logic of the saying in Lk 5:32 they also are "sinners" for whom Jesus has come, over whose repentance there may yet be rejoicing in heaven. There is, therefore, no real distinction in Luke's gospel between the fundamental attitude Jesus holds with regard to the Pharisees, whose religious practices come under his condemnation, and those irreligious Jews to whom he likewise announces remission of sin contingent upon repentance. The gospel of repentance proclaimed by Jesus is, like his table fellowship, offered to all Israel.

4. Jesus and the Disciples

The previous chapter argues that, in various ways, Luke presents Jesus in a sustained dialogue with his opponents and that, through this dialogue, Jesus calls those opponents, particularly Pharisees, to repent from their errors and become his disciples. I have suggested that this posture of the Lukan Jesus is part of a rhetorical strategy to either persuade non-Christian Jewish readers to become disciples of Jesus or else to convince Jewish and gentile Christians who live in proximity to such Jews to embody Jesus' posture of sustained dialogue with *their* opponents for the sake of their conversion. These proposals must confront the question of whether or not, in his presentation of the community of Jesus' disciples, Luke has figured Christian identity in a manner that depends upon the denigration of Jewish others. If this were found to be the case—if Luke's portrayal of the disciples in the Gospel and the early church in Acts were found to depend upon the negative images of those Jews who reject Jesus as the Christ—then the central thesis of this book would be disproved. It would, in that case, be meaningless to speak of a genuine rhetorical strategy aimed at persuading non-Christian Jews, and we would be forced to agree that Luke simply wanted to present Jesus and the apostles as doing all they could to convert "old Israel" but failing due to the inherent recalcitrance of that people. Since the thesis of the present work is about the relation of Luke's portrayal of Christian identity to his portrayal of Jewish identity, the present chapter inquires into the portrait of the disciples in the Gospel with the aim

of charting the shape of Luke's theological portrait of the nascent church and of discerning where connections with and distinctions from the Jewish people are evident.

4.1 The Belated Calling of the Twelve

All three synoptic gospels locate the calling of twelve disciples near the beginning of Jesus' ministry. In Luke, however, this calling is delayed in comparison with Mark and Matthew, with the result that Jesus' ministry begins and his identity is disclosed independently from the community he later forms. In each Synoptic gospel, Jesus' baptism and temptation are immediately followed by his withdrawal to Galilee, where he begins his public ministry (Mk 1:14-15; Mt 4:12-17; Lk 4:14-15). After briefly summarizing Jesus' early ministry, Mark and Matthew immediately narrate the calling of Peter, Andrew, and the sons of Zebedee along the shore of the Sea of Galilee (Mk 1:16-20; Mt 4:18-22). These disciples accompany Jesus until, after gathering a great crowd about him, Jesus assembles with them eight others, whom he also commissions as apostles (Mk 3:13-19; Mt 10:1-4). A similar sequence of occurs in Jn 1:29-51. In Luke, however, the calling of the twelve is preceded by a substantial period of ministry among undifferentiated multitudes (Lk 4:14-44). The Markan order has been altered in part through Luke's frontloading of the rejection in Nazareth (Lk 4:16-30; cf. Mk 6:1-6), and his insertion of this paradigmatic synagogue scene, in which the disciples are absent, increases the reader's focus on Jesus' uniqueness. (Had Jesus' disciples been present in

the Nazareth synagogue, the interpretation of that passage would be markedly different, for the reading of Isaiah's prophecy together with the statement "today this is fulfilled in your hearing" would create a much different impression in the presence of a proto-church.) But following the rejection at Nazareth, the Lukan Jesus enters Capernaum alone to accomplish his first miracle, the healing of the demoniac in the synagogue (4:31-37; cf. Mk 1:21-28). The confessions of Jesus' identity as "the Holy One of God" and "Son of God" by demons (Lk 4:34, 41) thus predates not only the confession of Peter, as in Mark (Mk 8:29; cf. Lk 9:20), but the very identification of any of the twelve. Together with the Lukan announcement of Jesus' identity as the Christ by the angel Gabriel (1:32-35), these demonic annunciations portray Jesus' identity as a fact known primarily in the realm of spirits, rather than among human agents. Human reactions to Jesus' deeds of power are, as at Nazareth, primarily ones of wonder (4:32, 36; cf. v.22), and the report about Jesus spreads throughout "every place in the region" before there is any hint of the formation of a community of discipleship (4:37).

Luke follows Mark in narrating Jesus' retreat to the home of Simon and the healing of Simon's mother-in-law, despite the fact that Luke has not introduced Simon to the reader at this point. The reader probably is expected to know who Simon Peter is, but the chief of the apostles has yet to be called by Jesus (cf. Lk 5:1-11). The narrative aporia is no accident, however, for Luke's redactional judgment that Simon is not yet a disciple is consistently worked into the story. When in Luke Jesus rises early in the

morning and departs “to a deserted place” (εἰς ἔρημον τόπον, Mk 1:35, Lk 4:42), it is not, as in Mark, “Simon and his companions” who seek him but “the crowds” (Lk 4:42; cf. Mk 1:36). These want to detain Jesus, but he is destined to proclaim the kingdom of God in other cities, including those not only of Galilee but, strikingly, those that house the synagogues of *Judea* (4:44). This statement, which initially appears as a geographical anomaly in the narrative, may be explained if, for Luke, the term *Ἰουδαία* “die Bedeutung »Judenland« hat...nicht nur Judäa im engeren Sinne, sondern das gesamte jüdische Palästina.”¹ This judgment is supported particularly by the reference in Lk 23:5 to “all of Judea, from Galilee to here” (καθ’ ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας, καὶ ἀρχάμενος ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἕως ὧδε, cf. Acts 10:37). Even so, the statement that Jesus departed Capernaum to preach in all the synagogues of Judea (4:43-44) may anticipate a journey to the *region* of Judea, and this occurs before any of the twelve are called. This synopsis of the Galilean ministry demonstrates that the Lukan story of Jesus can be summarized without reference to the disciples (cf. Acts 10:38). The substantial delay of any introduction of the twelve, in juxtaposition to Luke’s sustained portrayal of Jesus’ presence among and interaction with the crowds of Galilee (4:14, 36, 42, 5:1), suggests that the encounter between Jesus and the broader populace is of special concern to Luke.

¹ Lohfink, *Sammlung*, 39.

4.2 *The People and the Apostles*

Gerhard Lohfink has argued persuasively that the Gospel of Luke and the early chapters of Acts present Jesus and, after his ascension the apostles, as confronting all Israel. Luke frequently presents Jesus as speaking to “the people,” often altering his Markan source that referred instead to “crowds.”² Moreover, Luke includes narrative comments that indicate the positive response of “all the people” to John (Lk 3:15, 20:6; Acts 13:24), Jesus (Lk 7:29, 8:47, 18:43, 19:48, 20:6, 45, 21:38; cf. 24:19) and the apostles (Acts 2:47, 3:9, 11; cf. 4:10).³ As Lohfink persuasively argues, Luke’s frequent use of the definite noun ὁ λαός (76 times) functions in light of the ubiquitous use of the articular noun in the Septuagint and, particularly, in view of Luke’s clear use of the term to designate Israel (1:10, 21, 68, 77, 2:10, 31), to present for the reader the idea of the people as a whole.⁴ This redactional tendency, according to which Jesus is presented as standing before all the people, finds confirmation in the narrative summaries of Jesus’ life contained in the speeches of the latter chapters of the gospel and Acts. On the road

² Ibid., 34. See, for example, Mk 3:9 // Lk 6:17; Mk 11:18 // Lk 19:48; Mk 12:37 // Lk 20:45.

References to ὁ λαός are nearly absent in Mark (see Mk 7:6, 14:2), and the people *as a whole* never act with respect to Jesus. The fear of a riot in Mk 14:2 may express a suspicion that Jesus has gained a following among the people, but Passover was a time when riots were intrinsically more probable anyway.

³ On this portrayal, see Lohfink, *Sammlung*, 33-62.

⁴ The predominant concern with Israel is evident particularly in Lk 1-2; cf. Lohfink, *Sammlung*, 17-32.

to Emmaus the two disciples explain “the things about Jesus of Nazareth, who appeared as a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and *all the people* (παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ)” (Lk 24:19). Peter likewise urges his Pentecost audience of “Israelites,” “Jews from every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5), to consider “Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested *to you* by God” (Acts 2:22). Peter’s message to the gentile Cornelius is a recounting of the “word that God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ,” a message “that spread throughout *all Judea*” (ὃ γενόμενον ῥῆμα καθ’ ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας, Acts 10:36-7). The Lukan Paul likewise recounts how “God has presented to Israel a Savior, Jesus (ἤγαγεν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ σωτῆρα Ἰησοῦν),” whose coming was anticipated by John’s proclamation of “a baptism of repentance to *all the people* of Israel” (παντὶ τῷ λαῷ Ἰσραήλ); Acts 13:23-24; cf. 19:4). In these succinct synopses of the story of Jesus, the encounter with all Israel is clear.

If Jesus is thus presented by Luke as standing before the people of Israel, broadly conceived, how does the Lukan portrait of the disciples fit within this portrayal? The relationship between the disciples and the people is perhaps best illustrated in Luke’s presentation of the audience of the Sermon on the Plain in Lk 6:12-20. The calling of the twelve apostles in 6:13-16 is immediately followed by their joining “with a great crowd of his disciples (ὄχλος πολὺς μαθητῶν) and a great multitude of the people (πλήθος πολὺ τοῦ λαοῦ) from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon” (6:17). This image, in which a large number of disciples is juxtaposed to “the people,” who flock to

Jesus from all Israel, is distinctively Lukan.⁵ Although Jesus looks at his disciples in 6:20 and appears to address his teaching about the kingdom of God to them alone, the crowds do not depart, nor are they, as in Matthew, separated by a topographical barrier. “On a level place,” topographically and metaphorically, Jesus’ disciples and the crowds hear Jesus’ words together (6:17).⁶ When the discourse closes at 7:1 it is clear that that the entire sermon has been “in the hearing of the people” (ἐπλήρωσεν πάντα τὰ ῥήματα αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς ἀκοὰς τοῦ λαοῦ). Jesus’ teachings are thus not addressed to the disciples in contradistinction to the people but to both.⁷ The distinction between the two groups is thus blurred, as people and disciples gather together before Jesus.⁸

⁵ So rightly Lohfink, *Sammlung*, 64-67. Mark frequently speaks of a “large crowd” (ὄχλος πολὺς; Mk 4:1, 5:21, 24, 9:14) but never of a “crowd of disciples.” In Mk 8:34, however, Jesus instructs a crowd along with the disciples in the way of costly discipleship. This scene likely provided an impetus for the Lukan image of Jesus instructing the people *en bloc* along with the disciples (as Lohfink suggests, *Sammlung*, 74, n. 196).

⁶ As Lohfink summarizes, Jesus’ teachings in Luke “tendieren nicht nur zur Öffentlichkeit, sondern sie sind...so inszeniert, daß die Volksscharen das, was eigentlich Jüngerbelehrung sein soll, mithören und miterleben” (*Sammlung*, 73-74).

⁷ See Lk 12:1, 22, 54; 20:45. Lohfink rightly observes in Luke’s portrayal an alteration of Mark’s division between the people and the disciples (*Sammlung*, 76-77).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

The principal import of this observation for the present study is that Luke portrays the people of Israel and the disciples in parallel, as jointly attendant upon Jesus' teaching about the way of discipleship in the kingdom of God. The partial conflation of these groups has two important effects. First, as Lohfink has rightly argued, the people are portrayed as assembling before Jesus *as a whole* to learn from him as would-be disciples.⁹ Since, as Jervell has stressed, many of the people either remain or become Jesus' disciples in Acts, the prefiguration of this motif in the Gospel has a positive rather than negative effect with regard to Luke's portrait of the people.¹⁰ They are portrayed in the gospel, as well as in Acts (2:47, 3:11), as gathering with the disciples. Secondly, by associating the twelve with the people, whose relation to Jesus appears ambivalent, Luke intertwines his portrait of the moral life of Jesus' most intimate associates with his equally complex portrayal of the people of Israel.¹¹

⁹ K. N. Giles thus rightly judges the association of the twelve with the people to be the work of an evangelist who has not given up the hope of Jewish conversion ("The Church in the Gospel of Luke," *SJT* 34 [1981]: 128-130).

¹⁰ See Jacob Jervell, "The Divided People of God," in *Luke and the People of God*, 41-74; idem, "The Mighty Minority," *ST* 34 (1980): 13-38. For a critique of the reading of Sanders, according to which positive portrayals of the people redound to their damnation in retribution for their rejection of the gospel, see Chapter 1.

¹¹ On the ambivalent moral character of the people in Luke-Acts, see Joseph Tyson, *Images of Judaism in Luke-Acts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992). For Tyson the image of Paul

4.3 The Humanity of the Apostles

4.3.1 Simon Peter

Having concluded that Luke distinctly portrays the people of Israel in parallel to the disciples, we now turn to consider more closely how Luke has portrayed Jesus' closest followers, specifically the inner circle of the twelve apostles. Our investigation of Luke's portrait of the twelve begins where Luke does, with Simon Peter, the first named follower of the adult Jesus. Whereas in Mk 1:16-20 Jesus first calls Simon and Andrew, then James and John, from the shore of the Sea of Galilee, the key events of the uniquely Lukan scene at Lk 5:1-11 occur on the open water.¹² Jesus enters Simon's boat and has him put out from the shore so that he can teach the crowds from the water (Lk 5:1-3). When the teaching is finished, Jesus instructs Simon to navigate into deeper waters, where Jesus oversees a catch of fish so large that it begins to sink two boats (vv.4-7). Astounded, Simon falls at Jesus' knees pleading, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" (v.8). Although Jesus comforts Simon with the announcement, "From now

among Roman Jews in Acts 28 overcomes this ambiguity and exposes Luke's settled outlook on the hopeless recalcitrance Jewish people (*Images*, 188).

¹² Though Luke has delayed the call and blended it with the scene at Mk 4:1, he has followed the sequence of calls in Mk 1:16-20 by having Jesus first enter a boat with Peter, to be joined later by James and John in Lk 5:10.

on you will be catching people" (v.10), he does not dispute Simon's claim to be a sinner. Rather, the statements in the same chapter that Jesus "eats with sinners" and has "not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (5:30, 32) seem to presuppose and affirm Peter's sinfulness, for this charge does not arise until after Peter and the others join Jesus' fellowship. The fact that Peter is the first apostle called to a ministry of "catching people" does not preclude the direct admission that the chief of apostles is "a sinful man."

Luke's portrayal of this encounter on the sea means that the narrative does not result in Peter "immediately" following Jesus at a word, as he does in Mk 1:18 and Mt 4:20. Rather, the crew must first traverse the distance from the "deep water" (v.4) to the shore before Peter, now accompanied by the sons of Zebedee, can leave everything of his former life and follow Jesus (v.11). This slight delay is the result of Luke's correlation of the call of Peter as a "fisher of men" (*ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων*, Mk 1:17) with the miracle of the great catch, a correlation that is somewhat ironic, since it will be a long while before the reader finds Peter "catching" anyone (cf. Acts 2:14-41). Even after Pentecost, Peter will still need to be instructed to put away certain convictions about gentile status in order to fulfill his vocation (so Acts 10:28). What the present scene reveals, then, is that the great

St. Peter, and with him the entire church, had its humble and awkward beginnings on the floor of a fish-filled boat confessing its sins (so *προσέπεσεν*, 5:8).¹³

In view of Luke's concern with repentance (cf. Lk 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30), Peter's confession of sinfulness is probably intended to function analogously to the prayer of the humble tax collector in 18:13: a model of contrition to the church. But confession is not for Luke the highest virtue; rather, a person is considered righteous through keeping the commands of God (cf. Lk 1:6, 8:21), particularly practices of generosity (cf. Lk 6:35; Acts 4:35, 11:24, 10:2). The exemplary nature of Peter's confession does not negate the truth of its content: the chief of Jesus' apostles, as the narrative of Peter's betrayal will show, is a sinful man. This sinfulness is debilitating, for rather than "immediately" following Jesus (as in Mk 1:18), Peter urges Jesus to depart from him. The saying about "catching people," which prompts an immediate, untroubled response from Peter in Mark, functions here to assure Peter that his sinfulness will not have the last word.

Lest there be any doubt as to Luke's intentions, he has included another distinctive exchange between Jesus and Peter at the end of Jesus' ministry. After his last meal with the apostles, Jesus announces to Peter that Satan has asked to sift the apostles like sand (22:31). Jesus does not rescue his apostles from such a fate but assures Peter, "I

¹³ Intriguingly, the correlation of the miracle of a great catch with the sinfulness and commissioning of Peter is present also in Jn 21:4-8, 15-17, suggesting some sort of traditional connection between the two stories.

have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail" (v.32). To this word of comfort Jesus gives, as he did in 5:10, a calling with respect to the community: "And you, when you have returned, strengthen your brothers" (22:32). Although Luke does not follow Mark in narrating the actual desertion of Jesus by the twelve (Mk 14:50; cf. Mt 26:56), Jesus' statement about Satan's sifting appears to presuppose such a desertion. It is when Peter has "turned" that he can strengthen his fellow apostles, whom Jesus apparently anticipates will be in a situation of similar weakness.¹⁴ Jesus thus depicts Peter as one who needs Jesus' prayer and who needs encouragement to "turn" from his apostasy, but whom Jesus nevertheless commissions as an agent of strengthening the similarly weakened church.¹⁵ In the verses that immediately follow, Jesus predicts Peter's denial in the face of the latter's adamant insistence upon his own fidelity (22:33-34). Luke's narrative, however, bears out Jesus' understanding of Peter as the more accurate one. Despite the fact that Peter and the other apostles have stood with Jesus in his previous trials, have had the kingdom of God conferred upon them, and have been promised seats on thrones of judgment (22:28-30), they are unable to stand with Jesus in his final

¹⁴ The language of "turning" (*ἐπιστρέψας*) is part of the grammar of repentance; see also Lk 1:16-17, 17:4; Acts 3:19, 11:21, 15:9, 26:18, 20, 28:27. For this grammar Luke is indebted particularly to the Greek scriptures (e.g. Is 46:8, Jer 18:8, Joel 2:14).

¹⁵ "Strengthening" is one of Luke's favorite phrases for the pastoral work of the church (Acts 14:22, 15:32, 41, 16:5, 18:23).

hour. Luke's final picture of the pre-Easter Peter is that of a man doubly overcome with weakness, who, filled with remorse over his inability to hold firm to his profession of fidelity, "went out and wept bitterly" (22:62).¹⁶ This portrayal runs directly counter to ancient standards of masculine dignity and self-possession, but Luke's framing of the ministry of Jesus with these two strikingly human images of Peter is deliberate.¹⁷ The picture of Peter—and of the nascent church he symbolizes—that Luke wishes to present is that of a faltering apostle before a commissioning Jesus.

If, as I am arguing, Luke's image of Peter is one that emphasizes the apostle's fallibility, how does this comport with Luke's omission of the conflict between Jesus and Peter in Mk 8:32-33? At Luke 9:18-22, Luke has entirely omitted Peter's opposition to Jesus' prediction of his death, and this redaction could be taken as indicating a desire to

¹⁶ This minor agreement with Mt 26:75 (καὶ ἐξεληθῶν ἔξω ἔκλαυσεν πικρῶς), though absent in several important witnesses (including 0171 and several old Latin mss) and disrupted by the insertion of ὁ Πέτρος in others, is probably original and reflects the difficulty of determining Luke's precise relation to material from Matthew. Bovon regards the agreement as due to an oral tradition, shared with Matthew, that was necessary early in the tradition to explain the awkward phrase from Mark, which Luke is here otherwise following: καὶ ἐπιβαλὼν ἑκλαίεν ("and throwing himself [out? down?], he was weeping," Mk 14:72). See Bovon, *Luke 3*, 227.

¹⁷ For Luke's parodic use of ancient standards of masculine self-control to challenge notions of ecclesial power, see Brittany E. Wilson, *Unmanly Men: Refigurations of Masculinity in Luke-Acts* (Oxford: OUP, 2015), 13-76, 243-264.

show Peter and his confession in a more positive light.¹⁸ There is a truth to this observation, for as Bovon observes the Markan scene is subject to a potential misreading: did the association with Satan indicated in Jesus' rebuke undermine Peter's apostolic calling? The difficulty of the Markan scene makes it likely (in light of other controversies in which Peter is involved, such as we read of in Acts 11:1-19; 15:1-29; cf. Gal 2:11-14) that Luke omits the confrontation between Jesus and Peter because of its questionable utility for his community: "The tone and severity of this not entirely transparent dialogue are intolerable to him."¹⁹ But admitting Luke's discomfort with the Markan scene does not imply that Luke presents an image of Peter that is simply the obverse of Mark's.

A brief comparison with Matthew's redaction of the same passage is illustrative, for the Matthean Jesus responds to Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi by blessing Peter as the "rock" who will receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven and upon whom Jesus will found the church (Mt 16:17-19). Yet, somewhat strangely, Matthew *retains* Jesus' sharp denunciation of Peter a few verses later (Mt 16:23). How are these scenes to be reconciled? Mark Goodacre helpfully reminded us that, for redaction criticism to

¹⁸ So Bovon: "Luke is...concerned with ecclesiology and christology here. The reader learns that Peter answered the Lord correctly: the church's confession has its roots in the pre-Easter period" (*Luke 1*, 363); cf. Giles, "The Church in Luke's Gospel," 131.

¹⁹ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 362.

function well, it must not move immediately from particular redactional analyses to discussion of an author's *Tendenz*. Rather, alleged redactional tendencies must be assessed in light of a broader assessment of an author's entire narrative, which is able to integrate the observations of redaction criticism in order to assess their significance. Goodacre has argued persuasively that Matthew's modifications to the Markan portrait of Peter constitute a "successful reading" of the Markan Peter, since Matthew's portrait develops elements that are present but obscure in Mark's portrayal.²⁰ By analogy, in the case of Luke's omission of Mk 8:32-33, we must assess the significance of the omission in light of the much more extensive portrayal of Peter in Luke's 52-chapter narrative.²¹

In fact, Luke himself relates Peter's opposition to Jesus in the Cornelius episode. The vision in which Peter receives a command to kill and eat unclean animals (Acts 10:9-16) is interpreted by Peter as a corrective of an improper view of gentiles (10:28). Peter's

²⁰ Mark Goodacre, "The Rock on Rocky Ground: Matthew, Mark and Peter as Skandalon" in Philip McCosker, ed., *What Is It That the Scripture Says?: Essays in Biblical Interpretation, Translation, And Reception in Honour of Henry Wansbrough Osb.* Library of New Testament Studies (London & New York: Continuum, 2006): 68. Reproduced at <http://markgoodacre.org/articles.htm>.

²¹ If the Matthean scene at Caesarea Philippi was known by Luke, Luke's omission of both Jesus' confrontation with Peter and the Matthean blessing of Peter would result in a more complex redactional judgment. However we resolve the source-critical issue, the complex effect of Matthew's stark juxtaposition of the blessing with the malediction find expression in a different way in Luke's narrative of Peter's denial, failures, and calling to the office of apostolic pastor (see esp. Lk 22:31-34, discussed below).

rebuff of the divine directive (“By no means Lord” — μηδαμῶς, κύριε), which the reader first encounters in Acts 10:14 and then hears again in the report at 11:8, is not altogether unlike the rebuke he delivers Mk 8:32. In both cases, Peter appears motivated by a mistaken piety that imagines a different path for fulfilling the divine plan than what is commanded by the κύριος to whom he protests. Rather than create a doublet in his portrayal of Peter, Luke has omitted the protest of the Markan Peter in the gospel (which to him served little purpose beyond showing the frailty of the apostle—a goal Luke accomplishes without Mk 8:32-33) in favor of his own version in Acts, which has a clear role in explaining the development of the gentile mission.²² In Acts 10, 11, and 15, the function of Peter as the chief proponent of the gentile mission receives its rhetorical power from Peter’s initial befuddlement.²³ As Wolfgang Dietrich has recently argued through an exhaustive study of Luke’s portrait of Peter, the lack of understanding of the apostle reveals that he is not idealized but functions within Luke’s historical scheme of

²² For Luke’s preference for avoiding doublets, see Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:79-83. We will observe this redactional pattern, in which Markan material from the Galilean ministry of Jesus is omitted by Luke only to resurface later in his narrative, in our discussion of the Lukan portrayal of the twelve later in this chapter.

²³ For an analysis of the socio-rhetorical function of Luke’s narratives of gentile inclusion, see David Smith, “Jewish Attitudes Toward Gentile Impurity in the Second Temple and Rabbinic Periods: Reading the Acts of the Apostles in a Jewish Matrix,” paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, November 2016.

explicating the identity of Jesus and the early Christian mission.²⁴ Within Luke's exposition of these christological and ecclesiological concerns, the humanity of the arch-apostle is central to his function, for his shortcomings frequently provide foils for Luke's theological instruction.²⁵

4.3.2 James and John

James and John stand next to Peter in the inner circle of Jesus' disciples.²⁶ These three alone among the apostles are permitted to witness Jesus raising a young girl from the dead (8:51), and they alone accompany Jesus to the mount of transfiguration (9:28-36). It is notable, therefore, that Luke omits the Markan episode of the request of James and John to sit at Jesus' right hand in glory (Mk 10:35-40). Matthew has adjusted this episode so that the request comes from the *mother* of James and John and not from the

²⁴ See Wolfgang Dietrich, *Das Petrusbild der lukanischen Schriften*. BZWANT 94 (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1972), 322-32.

²⁵ Dietrich observes the christological function of Peter in Luke's Gospel, in which the apostle's failures underscore the great difference between him and Jesus. But he does not equally develop the role of the humanity of Peter in the early church, despite the recognition that the mission to the gentiles begins with the Spirit working over against Peter's repeated resistance. For Dietrich Acts 9-11, in which Peter's slowness to perceive divine directives is on display, is "der Höhepunkt in der lukanischen Darstellung der Petrusgestalt" (*Petrusbild*, 291).

²⁶ Andrew, the brother of Peter, is named only in the lists at Lk 6:14 and Acts 1:13. In the latter verse he appears after James and John (contrast Mk 1:16 // Mt 4:18; cf. Jn 1:40-42).

apostles themselves, and it has been suggested that this alteration reflects a desire to exculpate the apostles from the hubris they display in Mark.²⁷ If this were true—if early Christians found Mark’s portrayal of James and John embarrassing—then Luke’s omission of the incident could be explained as a desire to improve their image in his gospel. If this argument from Luke’s silence were accepted, it would support the thesis that Luke’s redaction of Mark seeks to “clean up” Mark’s systematic sully of the twelve’s reputation. However, arguments from omission must be carefully scrutinized. There are many redactional choices made by the gospel writers, and the logic of each of these choices is not always intelligible. In the case of an omission, proposed explanations of an author’s redactional logic are strengthened when corroborated by evidence from elsewhere in the author’s own writing.

In the case of James and John, however, the suggestion that Luke polishes their reputation by omitting their request at Mk 10:35 is countermanded by Luke’s inclusion of a story in which James and John propose a genocide against a village of Samaritans that refuses to welcome Jesus (Lk 9:51-56)—a proposal that might reasonably be understood as an *abuse* of the sort of power requested in Mk 10:35. The question, “Lord,

²⁷ So Ulrich Luz, following a general tendency in modern scholarship (*Matthew: A Commentary*, Hermeneia, 3 Vols, trans. James E. Crouch (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989-2005), 2:542-43). Luz observes, however, that many ancient commentators understood the mother to have made the request at the insistence of her sons (thus harmonizing her request with the Markan scene while retaining their guilt).

do you want us to call down fire from heaven and destroy them?" receives an unequivocal "no" from Jesus, who turns and rebukes them (στραφείς δὲ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτοῖς, 9:54-5). A great number of important early manuscripts contain a longer reading at 9:55: "He rebuked them and said, 'You do not know what sort of spirit you are of; the Son of Man did not come to destroy human life but to save.'"²⁸ If this passage is original to Luke, the import for Luke's portrayal of James and John is obvious. If it is a later insertion, it shows that this passage was read very early on as seriously calling into question the spiritual constitution of the apostles. Either way, this offer to initiate a heavenly genocide receives an overt rebuke from Jesus, whereas the request for status at Mk 10:35 does not. Luke's replacing of the Markan episode with a different one thus has the net effect of intensifying rather than diminishing the Markan critique of James and John. Nevertheless, rebuke is not dismissal; and after this rebuke James and John continue in Jesus' company.²⁹

²⁸ Bovon considers this logion (which is present in various forms in D, K, Γ, Θ, ^f1.13, 579, 700, 2542, old Latin and Syriac, Vulgate, Peshitta, and Boharic mss) to be a later apothegmatic gloss but admits the possibility of its originality (*Luke 2, 5*).

²⁹ The desire to bring down fire from heaven is not altogether anathema to Luke. In the spirit of Elijah, Jesus himself declares "I came to cast fire upon earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!" (Lk 12:49, cf. 2Kgs 1:12). The issue is not whether or not God will execute judgment through Jesus (cf. Acts 17:31) but rather how and when that judgment will come. Judgment is coming for Luke, but not

4.3.3 The Twelve

The Lukan image of Peter as a sinner who needs repentance but who is nevertheless commissioned by Jesus corresponds to Luke's redaction of Mark's portrait of the twelve disciples as a group. As is well known, Mark's gospel presents a stark picture of the disciples' lack of understanding and of Jesus' incredulity at their unbelief.³⁰ In Luke's redaction of this feature of Mark, K.N. Giles has discerned a tendency that is directly opposed to that in Mark: "This picture [of the disciples in Mark] Luke systematically corrects. The twelve and the larger group of disciples are, for Luke, always faithful to Jesus."³¹ We have seen already that this statement is flatly untrue with respect to Peter. It probably also fails to account for the desire of James and John to annihilate an entire village. It now remains for us to consider whether it holds with

immediately (cf. Lk 19:11-27). In the age of the church Jesus' commanded ethic is clear: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you...do not condemn" (6:27-28, 37).

³⁰ For a survey and critique of the interpretation of this portrait in modern scholarship, see C. Clifton Black, *The Disciples According to Mark: Markan Redaction in Current Debate*, 2nd Ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).

³¹ Giles, "The Church in the Gospel of Luke," 130.

respect to Luke's adjustments to Mark's portrait of the twelve or whether Luke has retained something of the substance of the Markan critique of the disciples.

4.3.3.1 Misunderstanding the Parables – Mk 4:10-13 / Lk 8:9-10

In Luke, as in Mark, the disciples ask Jesus about the meaning of the parable of the sower and hear in Jesus' answer a strong allusion to Is 6:10 (in a shortened form in Luke) with respect to "those outside" in Mk 4:11 and to "the rest" in Lk 8:10. This softening of the Markan distinction between the disciples and the people is in keeping with the conflation of the groups we have observed above. In Luke, as in Mark, Jesus' disciples are given a privileged understanding of the "secrets of the kingdom of God" as Jesus interprets for them the meaning of the parable. In Mark, however, Jesus prefaces his explanation with a questioning rebuke, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?" (Mk 4:13). While Luke omits this rebuke, he also omits the Markan contrast between the crowds and disciples that frames the latter in a positive light: "With many other such parables he was speaking the word to them, as they were able to hear it. He did not speak to them without a parable, but to his disciples he disclosed everything" (*ἐπέλυεν πάντα*, Mk 4:33-34). The similarities and differences between the Lukan and Markan portrayals of the disciples thus come to this: in both gospels the disciples do not understand the parable spoken to the crowd, and Jesus therefore explains the parable to them privately. Mark, however, presents Jesus'

criticism of the disciples' lack of understanding through the device of a shaming rhetorical question. Nevertheless, Mark indicates Jesus' willingness to explain everything to his disciples, deploying the cryptic form of the parable to distinguish between the inner circle of disciples, to whom everything is explained, and the crowds who are "on the outside" (τοις ἔξω, Mk 4:11). This willingness to explain everything in private suggests that the question of Mk 4:13 is rhetorical and designed to reprove the disciples while calling them to greater vigilance; the question accentuates the disciples' need for the explanation that Jesus readily gives.³² The fact that Jesus discloses everything to the disciples in Mark mitigates the image of the Markan disciples as *entirely* in the dark. These two elements—the shaming reproof of the disciples through Jesus' exclamation and the full explanation of everything to them in private—are absent in the Lukan telling of the event.

Luke does not, however, neglect these motifs elsewhere in his gospel. When the resurrected Jesus hears Cleopas and his associate recount their loss of hope that Jesus "was the one to redeem Israel," he responds with language reminiscent of the critique in Mark 4:

³² So Marcus, *Mark*, 1:310-311.

O how foolish you are and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke!
Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer and enter into his glory?" And
beginning with Moses and then from all the prophets he interpreted to them in
all the scriptures the things concerning himself. (Lk 24:25-27)

In this question ("Was it not necessary [οὐχὶ ταῦτα ἔδει] ...?") Jesus is not asking for the disciples' hermeneutical viewpoint; this question, framed with a negative (cf. Mk 4:13, οὐκ οἶδατε τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην;), is rhetorical and aimed at rebuking their misunderstanding. Jesus proceeds, however, to explain to them "everything written" (πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα, 24:44). This explanation of the scriptures is described in the Emmaus episode as an "opening" (διήνοιγεν, 24:32),³³ and the instruction of the eleven disbelieving disciples in Jerusalem is similarly structured: "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ... Then he opened their mind to understand the scriptures (διήνοιξεν αὐτῶν τὸν νοῦν τοῦ συνιέναι τὰς γραφάς, 24:37, 45). The language of "opening" (διανοίγω) in Lk 24:32, 45 differs somewhat from the motif of "disclosure" (ἐπιλύω) in Mk 4:13, but the two accounts of Jesus' engagement with the disciples share a common rhetorical strategy (negative rhetorical question aimed at shaming), a common narrative pattern (a question shaming misunderstanding, followed

³³ The language of "opening" corresponds to a common rabbinic term (פתח) for scriptural interpretation.

by the rectification of that misunderstanding), and a similar grammar to relay Jesus' teaching ("opening/disclosing everything"). One cannot read the reaction of the Lukan Jesus to the two downcast disciples without both recognizing the degree to which these disciples share in the disbelief of the eleven and concluding that the Lukan Jesus is at least as critical of them as the Markan Jesus was of the twelve in Galilee.³⁴

4.3.3.2 Unbelief in the Storm – Mk 4:36-41, 6:47-52 / Lk 8:22-25

Mark records two stories of Jesus encountering his disciples' unbelief in a moment of nautical peril. In the first, Jesus is asleep in the stern of the boat during "a great windstorm" (Mk 4:37). After Jesus wakes to the distressed cries of his disciples and calms the storm, he says to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you not yet have faith?" (τί δειλοί ἐστε; οὐπω ἔχετε πίστιν; Mk 4:40). The disciples then marvel at Jesus' power and ponder his identity. Luke recounts the same episode in much the same manner, except that Jesus asks the disciples, "Where is your faith?" (ποῦ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν; Lk 8:25).

³⁴ Mark Sheridan is formally correct that Luke does not refer to Cleopas and his associate as "disciples," but only as "two of them" (δύο ἐξ αὐτῶν, 24:13). The pronoun refers, however, to "the eleven and the rest" of v.9. Sheridan's speculation about the technical meaning of "disciple" in the history of early Christianity draws no support from Luke, who uses the term indiscriminately of the twelve (e.g. Lk 5:30) and the larger community of Jesus' followers (e.g. Acts 9:1). See Sheridan, "Disciples and Discipleship in Matthew and Luke," *BTB* 3, no.3 (1973): 239-240.

The Lukan question has appeared to present a less dire situation with regard to the disciples' faith, since the disciples *have* faith; the question is one of its active presence or expression. The Markan disciples, however, have yet to obtain faith. Yet the significance of this difference in Jesus' mode of expression is often exaggerated. What does the Lukan question mean except that the disciples—who behave in Luke exactly as they do in Mark—have failed with respect to faith? There is, to be sure, a rhetorical difference between the mode of Jesus' question in Mark and in Luke, and it is possible to read in Jesus' rebuke in Mark an especially frustrated Jesus who *expects* faith at this point and does not find it (cf. Mk 6:6).³⁵ But the same tone of frustration may be read into the Lukan Jesus' question, and there can be no doubt that the words of the Lukan Jesus ("Where is your faith?") are intended as a rebuke, even if it is somewhat more moderate than in Mark.³⁶

Luke's awareness and retention of the unbelief of the disciples is evident in the uniquely Lukan preface to the parable of the mustard seed. The parable in Mark occurs

³⁵ The parallel in Mk 6:6, in which Jesus is said to have been astounded at the lack of faith in his hometown, suggests that what is *most* different between Mark and Luke is not their views of the disciples but their portraits of Jesus, who in Luke is not surprised by unbelief in Nazareth but rather anticipates it (so Lk 4:23, ἐξεῖτέ μοι...).

³⁶ The force of the rebuke in both gospels depends to some degree on the *tone* of Jesus' words—a feature that is difficult to evaluate in written texts.

in the context of Mark's statements about the disciples' failure to understand the parables. In Mark the mustard seed is an image of the kingdom of God, which begins small but grows to become a habitable tree for the birds of the air (Mk 4:30-32). Luke records this saying (Lk 13:18-19) but later in the narrative employs the mustard seed as an image of the disciples' faith. In apparent recognition of the paucity of their faith, the apostles implore Jesus, "Increase our faith!" to which Jesus replies, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you" (εἰ ἔχετε πίστιν ὡς κόκκον σινάπεως, ἐλέγετε ἂν τῇ συκαμίνῳ..., Lk 17:5-6). The implication of the saying is that the disciples do *not* have faith as large as the tiny mustard seed.³⁷ The need for their request is thus confirmed. It is little surprise, therefore, that Luke alone among the gospels records the overt disbelief of the apostles as a whole when they hear the women's report of the empty tomb: "[The women] told these things to the apostles, but these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they did not believe them (ἠπίσταν αὐταῖς, Lk 24:11). In light of this response, Jesus' words of rebuke in Lk 24:25-26 appear warranted, and the apostles' request in Lk

³⁷ The original form of this saying in Greek is difficult to determine. In Lk 17:6 the apodosis of the first-class conditional is rendered uncertain by ἂν with an imperfect verb. The parallel saying in Mt 17:20 (a third-class conditional) is, despite the context, more optimistic due to the simple future of the apodosis. The Lukan saying is thus the starker of the two forms; see BDF § 372.

17:5 seems not to be answered until the resurrected Jesus appears to correct his unfaithful followers.³⁸

In Mark's second instance of Jesus' startling his disciples on the open water, Jesus is observed walking on the waves in the midst of an adverse wind. Mark writes that Jesus' disciples "thought he was a ghost, and they cried out in fear, for all saw him and were terrified" (ἔδοξαν ὅτι φάντασμα ἐστίν, καὶ ἀνέκραξαν· πάντες γὰρ αὐτὸν εἶδον καὶ ἐταράχθησαν, Mk 6:49-50). At the close of the scene Mark explains that their astonishment was due to their failure to understand Jesus' power at the feeding of the multitudes, for "their hearts were hardened" (ἦν αὐτῶν ἡ καρδιά πεπωρωμένη, 6:52). Although Luke omits this episode, a striking parallel exists in the resurrection appearance at Lk 24:37-39. When Jesus appears in the midst of the eleven, Luke states that "they were terrified and became afraid, for they thought they were seeing a ghost"

³⁸ Mt 28:17 records post-Easter *doubt* among the eleven (οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν) but not unbelief. On the debated syntax of that verse see the sound conclusion of P.W. van der Horst, "Once More: The Translation of οἱ δέ in Matthew 28:17," *JSNT* 27 (1986): 27-30. John's gospel states of Thomas alone that he resisted belief (ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ... οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω, Jn 20:25; cf. v.27: μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός). Only Luke recounts the *outright rejection* of the resurrection by the eleven *as a whole*. The Lukan text is likely the source for the portion of the longer addition to Mark in which the disciples as a whole do not believe the women's report (Mk 16:10-11).

(πτοηθέντες δὲ καὶ ἔμβοβοι γενόμενοι ἐδόκουν πνεῦμα θεωρεῖν, 24:37).³⁹ The response of Jesus is one of rebuke, “Why are you terrified, and why do doubts arise in your hearts” (τί τεταραγμένοι ἐστὲ καὶ διὰ τί διαλογισμοὶ ἀναβαίνουσιν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν; 24:38). The words of the resurrected Jesus continue the Markan motif of the interrogatory rebuke of the disciples, the form of which appears to echo the question in Mk 4:40 (τί δειλοί ἐστε;). The Markan Jesus’ statement about the dubious hearts of the disciples reflects the narrator’s diagnosis: “They did not understand...but their hearts were hardened” (Mk 6:52). Through these connections it appears that Luke has not “systematically corrected” the portrait of the disciples’ unbelief in Mark but rather, in a concerted if not systematic fashion, relocated it into a portrait of the disciples’ unbelief at their post-resurrection encounters with Jesus. As we will observe shortly, the rhetorical function of this post-Easter failure in Luke’s narrative is closely related to the way in which the fallible apostles prefigure the life of the fallible church.

4.3.3.3 Misunderstanding Purity and Ethics – Mk 7:1-23 (v.18) / Lk 11:37-41

As we observed in the previous chapter, the Markan episode of Jesus’ discussion about handwashing with the scribes and Pharisees has been substantially modified by

³⁹ At Lk 24:37 the diglot D reads φάντασμα/*fantasma* instead of the widely attested πνεῦμα. The reading of D may reflect a scribe’s remembrance of the language from the striking story at Mk 6:47-52; if so the variant is an ancient confirmation of the similarity between these two accounts.

Luke. In Mark's gospel the contrast Jesus draws is between the observance of ritual purity and the practice of morality. Jesus contrasts the two concerns, placing greater emphasis upon the latter and apparently relativizing the former in his concern to oppose "fornication, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, the evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness" (Mk 7:21-22).⁴⁰ In Luke a similar contrast obtains between ritual cleansing prior to a meal and the practice of moral virtue, but in Luke the moral practices discussed have a more explicitly social nature. The Pharisees "neglect justice and the love of God" (Lk 11:42a), and the scribes load people with heavy legal burdens while doing nothing to help them (11:46). The solution to this lack of charity in the administration of the law is not the dissolution of the laws of the Torah—for these should be observed minutely (11:42b!)—but generosity: "Give as alms those things which are within, and all things will be clean for you" (11:41).

Among the many substantial changes Luke makes to Mark's episode is the absence in Luke of any direct analogue to Mk 7:17-18, in which the disciples do not understand Jesus' words and, upon asking for an explanation, are criticized in what is now a familiar structure of rebuke: "Are you also without understanding?" (cf. Mk 4:10-13). While the scene in Mark places Jesus over against the mistaken Pharisees and the uncomprehending disciples, Luke removes the disciples from the scene. In this way, the

⁴⁰ On the debate over this passage see Chapter 3, n. 46.

picture of their failure to understand Jesus' teaching is somewhat muted by Luke, whose focus in this encounter is on Jesus' rebuke of the Pharisees and lawyers.

Luke, however, is not silent on the disciples' failure to embody Jesus' social vision with respect to the poor. It is when looking upon his disciples that Jesus pronounces his woes upon those *among them* who are rich and well fed (οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, 6:24-25, cf. 6:20). It is the disciples who are commanded to seek the kingdom of God without concern for wealth (12:1-21, 22-40) and who are warned severely against abuse of money, status, and power (12:41-48). The negative example of Ananias and Sapphira, who deceptively withhold alms, confirms that, for Luke, those who profess to follow Jesus may still lack understanding and so fall short of being able to be his disciples (Acts 5:1-11; cf. Lk 14:26-7). The scene in Acts, though not a redaction of Mk 7:18, nevertheless exemplifies the manner in which Luke has transformed Mark's critique of the disciples during the lifetime of Jesus into a frank admission of the failures of discipleship in the life of the early church.⁴¹

4.3.3.4 Misunderstanding the Yeast of the Pharisees – Mk 8:14-21 / Lk 12:1

Luke entirely omits Jesus' invective against the disciples over their misinterpretation of the cryptic saying about the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod. In

⁴¹ So Esler, *Community and Gospel*, 183-200.

Mark, the saying, "Beware the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod," is introduced after the narrative comment that the disciples had forgotten to bring bread upon their departure from Dalmanutha, and this anticipates their discussion of whether or not Jesus was reprimanding them for this oversight (Mk 8:14, 16). The reader thus naturally associates the related elements of bread and yeast, so that the words of Jesus come as a shock to the reader as well as the disciples:

He said to them, "Why are you considering that you have no bread? Do you not yet know or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes but do not see? Do you have ears but do not hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of pieces did you collect?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of pieces did you collect?" And they said to him, "Seven." Then he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?" (Mk 8:17-21)

Through this barrage of questions Jesus suggests that the disciples may be like the "rebellious house" of Israel in Ezek 12:2, who "have eyes for seeing but do not see and ears for hearing but do not hear." The imagery is also similar to that of Is 6:10, which is employed at Mk 4:12 with respect to the "outsiders" from whom the disciples have

previously been distinguished. Strikingly, the Markan Jesus does not explain the saying about the yeast but moves on to heal a man's blindness (Mk 8:22-26).⁴²

The difficulty of the Markan saying about the yeast has been handled differently by Matthew, who explains after the disciples' confusion that Jesus spoke about the *teaching* of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt 16:5-12, cf. v.23), and by Luke, who presents Jesus saying, "Beware the yeast—that is, the hypocrisy, of the Pharisees" (12:1). In view of the fact that Luke is aware of Pharisaic influences in the church (Acts 15:5), it is noteworthy that he does not directly inveigh here against the Pharisees' teaching. By incorporating the interpretation of the "yeast of the Pharisees" into the initial saying, Luke has removed any possibility of misunderstanding, and consequently the Markan diatribe against the disciples is absent.⁴³ This then is one place where Luke's redaction of Mark supports Giles's thesis. Yet the motive for this redaction is difficult to discern. The presence of a different interpretation of the Markan saying in Matthew reveals that it raised an interpretive difficulty. Consequently, Luke's redaction may simply be an

⁴² On this function of this passage within Mark's portrayal of the twelve and as part of Mark's rhetorical strategy of awakening his readers who are prone to similar blindness, see Marcus, *Mark*, 1:511-515.

⁴³ Luke's immediate inclusion of the saying in Lk 12:2-3 ("nothing is covered that will not be revealed or secret that will not become known") after the saying about the yeast is fitting, for Mark's cryptic saying may be one of the things spoken "in darkness" (Lk 12:3).

attempt to resolve a difficult saying of Jesus.⁴⁴ If so, the image of the disciples may be a secondary concern.

There is, however, a third element in Luke's redaction of this saying: the account it gives of those who reject Jesus' gospel. While the Markan Jesus asks provocatively whether the *disciples* have blind eyes and deaf ears like the people of Ezekiel's prophecy, he speaks more definitively with regard to the *crowds*. The purpose of the parables is to enact the words of Is 6:10, cloaking Jesus' message from "those outside...*so that while seeing they may see and not understand...*" (ἐκείνοις τοῖς ἔξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γίνεται ἵνα βλέποντες βλέπωσιν..., Mk 4:12). In Mark, then, Jesus' message functions to effect an epistemic division between Jesus disciples and "those outside."⁴⁵

This division is bolstered by the citation from Isaiah in Mk 4:12 and the allusive reference to Ezek 12:2 and Is 6:10 in Mk 8:17-18. In both passages the biblical prophets inveigh against a people unable to receive the prophet's message. This motif of a rejected prophet with a rejected message is paradigmatic for Mark's portrayal of Jesus

⁴⁴ Compare, for example, Luke's omission at Lk 6:4 of Mark's erroneous statement that David entered the house of God "when Abiathar was high priest" (Mk 2:26 // Mt 12:4; cf. 1Sam 21:1-6). The tendency to polish the material in Mark is more pronounced in Matthew, however (cf. Mk 10:18 / Lk 18:19 / Mt 19:17). On this tendency in Matthew, see Mark Goodacre, "An Orthodox Redaction of Mark? Reading Mark through Matthew's Eyes," paper read at the Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense, July 2017.

⁴⁵ This division is an aspect of Mark's portrait of the disciples and "outsiders" even if those on the outside occasionally grasp something of Jesus' message (e.g. Mk 12:32-34). See Marcus, *Mark*, 1:302-7.

(so Mk 6:4), and as we have seen in the scene at Lk 4:16-30, Luke substantially develops this Markan theme with extended attention to the scriptures generally and to Isaiah in particular. For Luke, who narrates Jesus' confrontation with Israel and who understands that confrontation through the scriptural lens of a rejected prophet, it may be that the words of Isaiah 6:10 have a fixed association that they do not have in Mark. For Mark, the disciples' lack of faith and understanding can temporarily raise the question, which functions as a tool of rebuke and correction, of whether they also, like those "outside," may be deaf and blind. While Luke spends ample time critiquing the disciples' faith and understanding, he may have found the language of Ezek 12:2 at Mk 8:17-18 too closely associated with that of Is 6:10, which was for him firmly associated with those in Israel who rejected Jesus' gospel, to apply these passages to the disciples without confusion. This firm association of Is 6:9-10 with those who reject the gospel is evident from Luke's extended and more accurate citation of that passage at the end of Acts.⁴⁶ However we may understand the function of the citation of Isaiah at the end of Acts, it stands at the close of Luke's narrative of Paul's divisive and contested mission in

⁴⁶In Lk 8:10, the allusion to Is 6:9 is governed by Mark's paraphrase at Mk 4:12. In Acts 28:26-27, however, Luke follows the text of Is 6:9-10 LXX with only slight modification.

order to account in some way for the rejection of the gospel by many Jews.⁴⁷ If, for Luke, Is 6:9-10 and its imagery had a fixed meaning (learned, at least in part, from Mk 4:11-12), the evocative similarity of the language of Mk 8:17-21 may explain Luke's decision not to include this particular critique of the disciples. To do so would have suggested what neither Mark nor Luke believed, that the twelve definitively rejected Jesus' gospel, and it may have introduced confusion into the issue of the rejection of the gospel by many Jews, an issue with which Luke-Acts is especially preoccupied.⁴⁸

The claim that Luke does not reproduce the invective against the disciples at Mk 8:17-21 because similar language is reserved for those who reject the gospel in Acts 28:26-27 raises the question of whether or not this alteration of Mark supports the thesis of Giles that Luke is engaged in saving the reputation of the twelve at the expense of unbelieving Jews, to whom he shifts Jesus' words of critique at the end of Acts. Two observations may be offered in response to this suggestion.

First, the thesis of Giles contains an important truth: Luke has more to say than Mark about the community of the apostles—a community that Luke is convinced is inhabited by the spirit of God and moves under the direction of the spirit of the

⁴⁷ For a cogent discussion of this important passage, its various interpretations, and a solution that coheres with the present thesis, see Daniel Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the 'Acts of the Apostles,'* SNTS 121 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 205-230.

⁴⁸ Cf. Dahl, "The Purpose of Luke-Acts," 95.

resurrected Jesus (Acts 2:17-33, 16:7). Despite his realism about the humanity of the church, Luke does not believe that the post-Pentecost apostles have eyes that fail to see.⁴⁹ While Luke's Jesus, like Mark's, has much to say in warning and rebuke to his disciples, he nevertheless pronounces a blessing upon their sight:

Turning to the disciples privately (κατ' ἰδίαν), he said, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you, many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but they did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but they did not hear it" (ἠθέλησαν ἰδεῖν ἃ ὑμεῖς βλέπετε καὶ οὐκ εἶδαν, καὶ ἀκοῦσαι ἃ ἀκούετε καὶ οὐκ ἤκουσαν; Lk 10:23-24).

Here the imagery of seeing and hearing (cf. Is 6:9-10) creates a positive connection between the disciples and the "prophets and kings" of Israel whose hopes are now realized among the disciples. This private disclosure to the disciples is, however, like what is stated in more muted terms in the disclosure at Mk 4:11: "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God," a locution that also occurs privately (κατὰ μόναν,

⁴⁹ Mark does not believe this either. For Mark, the mystery of the kingdom of God *was* given to the twelve (Mk 4:11), who are named as apostles in Mk 3:14 in order that they might be sent to preach (cf. Mk 6:7, 30). It is historically implausible that a narrative in which the twelve figured so largely was intended to fundamentally undermine their legacy.

Mk 4:10; cf. *κατ' ἰδίαν* in 4:34). As a positive articulation of the disciples' apprehension of Jesus and his message, this scene underscores the subtle difference between the Lukan and Markan portraits, for Luke more overtly affirms the disciples' apprehension even as he continues to subject their faith to criticism.

Secondly, Jesus' blessing of the disciples' eyes in Lk 10:23-24 reveals a second aspect of Luke's portrait of the disciples and of those who remain in epistemic darkness: Luke's narrative is self-consciously patterned on biblical history to a greater degree than Mark's. By affirming the fulfillment of the hopes of Israel's prophets and kings in the community of the disciples, the "continuation of the biblical history" is made explicit, and a consistent grammar of prophetic disclosure is maintained.⁵⁰ The prophet is rejected by those who lack eyes to see, but to those who are gifted with true sight, their vision is a cause for rejoicing (cf. Lk 10:21-22). This proclivity towards a consistent biblical typology is evident in Stephen's speech, in which biblical history, beginning with Joseph, is figured as a story of struggle between the prophets and those who oppose them (Acts 7:9-50). At the culmination of this history stand Jesus and his followers, the descendants of the prophets, who are oppressed by those whom Stephen casts as the heirs of those who rejected and killed the prophets (Acts 7:51-53; cf. Lk 11:47-48). Despite this developed typology, Peter still refers to unconverted Jews who bear

⁵⁰ See Dahl, "The Story of Abraham in Luke-Acts," 84.

him no hostility as “descendants of the prophets and of the covenant God gave to your ancestors” (Acts 3:25). The biblical typology is thus not organized according to an Israel/Church duality but according to a duality of reception/rejection of God’s prophets (as the threat at Acts 3:23 and Paul’s question to Agrippa in Acts 26:27 make clear). Peter’s speech, as well as Paul’s continued mission to Diaspora Jews, reveals that the question of reception or rejection is not determined by the initial rejection of Jesus by the council. The fact that Luke has conceived history in this way and has written his characters into this construal sheds light on the dynamics of Lukan redaction with regard to Mk 8:17-18. Given his view of biblical history, it would be inconsistent for Luke to deploy the Markan allusion to Is 6:10 against the disciples. The rationale for the omission is thus to be found not so much in a theory of ecclesial face-saving (for Luke substantially shares and sometimes develops Mark’s critique) but in a desire to portray the disciples within a coherent framework of prophetic history.

4.3.3.5 Misunderstanding the First Passion Prediction – Mk 8:29-33 / Lk 9:20-22

Following Peter’s confession of Jesus at Caesarea Philippi, Mark presents Jesus’ first passion prediction (Mk 8:31). Upon hearing that “the Son of Man must suffer many things” Peter rebukes Jesus, only to be himself rebuked in memorable terms: “Get behind me Satan, for you are considering not the things of God but the things of human beings!” (8:33). As an extension of this rebuke, Jesus instructs Peter and the rest of the

disciples (cf. 8:33a), together with the crowd, that the way of following after Jesus is the way of cross-bearing and death (8:34-38). Luke presents this same story but omits the reciprocal rebuke of Jesus and Peter, so that Peter's confession of Jesus is followed directly by instruction in the cost of discipleship without any apparent misunderstanding. This datum of Lukan redaction appears to support Giles's thesis of Luke's "systematic" improvement upon Mark's portrait of the disciples. As we will see with the later passion predictions, however, Luke both reproduces and at one point amplifies Mark's presentation of the disciples' misunderstanding, thus complicating Giles's simple explanation of the omission of Mk 8:32-33.⁵¹ But if the omission of Peter's rebuke of Jesus is not to be explained on the grounds of Giles's thesis, Luke's redaction requires more careful attention.

The most distinctive element of Mark's passage is the fact that Jesus calls Peter "Satan." Luke mentions Satan more than any other New Testament gospel.⁵² Of the four scenes in which Satan appears in Mark, only Mk 8:33 is omitted by Luke.⁵³ In

⁵¹ Giles, "The Church," 131.

⁵² On this topic, see Susan Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil: Magic and the Demoniac in Luke's Writings* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).

⁵³ The statements about Satan being opposed to himself in the Beelzebub episode are condensed in Lk 11:18 but nonetheless retained. The references to Satan in Jesus' temptation (Mk 1:13) have been modified in Luke to refer to "the devil" (Lk 4:2-14, cf. Mt 4:1-11). In the parable of the sower, Luke has

addition to Luke's retention of the remaining Markan scenes,⁵⁴ Luke presents Satan in no fewer than four episodes unique to his gospel, and he mentions Satan twice in Acts. For Luke, Satan is the oppressor of Abraham's children whom Jesus has come to liberate (Lk 13:16, cf. Acts 10:38), the sifter of Peter and the twelve (Lk 22:31), the one who possesses Judas Iscariot in order to betray Jesus (Lk 22:3), and the corrupter of the early church (Acts 5:3, cf. Acts 13:10). Yet despite Satan's power, Jesus and the later church proclaim his dethronement (Lk 10:18, Acts 26:18). Luke's presentation of the role of Satan is thus substantially more developed than Mark's, and it is within this more determined narrative that Luke's redaction of Mk 8:33 should be evaluated. As the dialogue between Jesus and Peter at Lk 22:31-34 indicates, Satan exercises a corrupting effect on the twelve. Although it is the twelve (ὕμᾱς in 22:31) who will be sifted like sand and not Peter alone, Jesus appears particularly concerned for Satan's effect upon Peter: "Simon, Simon! Satan has asked to sift you" (Lk 22:31). This diabolical request foreshadows Peter's denial (see Lk 22:54-62), which Jesus predicts in response to Peter's protests of

replaced Mark's "Satan" with "the devil" (Mk 4:15, Lk 8:12; cf. Mt 13:19: ὁ πονηρός). These changes suggest that there may have been a tendency in early Christianity to replace the name "Satan" with epithets of various sorts.

⁵⁴ See Mk 1:13 / Lk 4:2-13; Mk 3:23-26 / Lk 11:18; Mk 4:15 / Lk 8:12.

fidelity (22:33-34). This scene reveals that Luke *does* associate Peter with Satan, but he does so in a manner that differs from Mk 8:32-33.

The effect of Luke's omission of Mk 8:32-33 and addition of a different scene later in the gospel identifying Peter's actions with Satan's influence is complex. The simple notion of a Lukan *Tendenz* aimed at making Peter, with the rest of the apostles, "a model of what the Church should be like in prosperity and adversity" does not account for Luke's special attention to Peter's unique failure in the hour of Jesus' arrest or for Luke's retention and, at times, intensification of the disciples' failures.⁵⁵ It is true, on the other hand, that Luke's omission of Peter's opposition at Caesarea Philippi does "improve" Peter's image slightly, and this fact may be due, as Giles has intuited, to the fixed roles that Peter and Satan have in the narrative. Peter is a "sinful man" (Lk 5:8) but an apostle nonetheless. He is sifted by Satan and denies Jesus, but Jesus has prayed for his restoration and his future work (22:32). That work, as Peter's confused resistance in Joppa intimates (Acts 10:14, 28), does not depend so much on Peter's readiness and exemplary piety but on divine initiative (cf. Acts 15:7). These limitations notwithstanding, as a character Peter never represents consistent or decided opposition to God's purposes in the Luke-Acts narrative, contrary to what Mk 8:33 might suggest. It may be, then, that Luke viewed the mutual rebuke between Jesus and Peter as an

⁵⁵ Giles, "The Church," 132.

anomaly best left out of a story of in which Luke still has much more to say with regard to Peter.

4.3.3.6 Misunderstanding the Second Passion Prediction – Mk 9:32 / Lk 9:45

Luke reproduces with exactitude the Markan response of the disciples to Jesus' second passion prediction but notably inserts an additional explanation:

Table 2: The Second Passion Prediction

Mk 9:32	Lk 9:45
<p>But they did not understand the saying, and they were afraid to ask him.</p>	<p>But they did not understand this saying; its meaning was concealed from them (παρακεκαλυμμένον ἀπ' αὐτῶν), so that they could not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.</p>

According to Giles, the Lukan insertion absolves the disciples of culpability for their ignorance by explaining it as the result of “divine ordering.”⁵⁶ As Lk 24:25 makes clear, however, Jesus upbraids his disciples as “foolish and slow of heart to believe (ἀνόητοι καὶ βραδεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ τοῦ πιστεύειν) everything the prophets spoke,” even as “their

⁵⁶ Giles, “The Church,” 131.

eyes were kept from recognizing him" (24:16). Rather than divine superintendence excusing the disciples' unbelief through the apparent operation of, Luke presents them as culpable. As we shall see in the final chapter, culpability for unbelief can coexist with divine superintendence (see e.g., Acts 3:14-19) and does not preclude the possibility of realignment; instead it provides part of the rationale for the offer of repentance (cf. Acts 17:30-31).

The idea that the disciples manifest a slowness of heart through the mysterious operation of divine concealment is not, however, unique to Luke. Mark explains in similar terms the disciples' failure to understand Jesus' power during the storm on the sea: "They were exceedingly amazed, for they did not understand...but their hearts were hardened (ἦν αὐτῶν ἡ καρδία πεπωρωμένη, Mk 6:51-52). A similar construction occurs on the lips of Jesus at Mk 8:17: "Do you not yet understand or perceive? Do you have hardness in your hearts?" (πεπωρωμένην ἔχετε τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν). The language of "hardened hearts" is an idiom that occurs frequently in the passive and does not always indicate divine action (cf. Herm. Mand. 4.2.1; 11.4.4). Nevertheless, the earliest Christian usages of *πωρόω* were as "divine passives" that reflected the conviction that ignorance of Jesus' identity was something mysteriously intended by God (so Rom 11:7, 2Cor 3:14; cf. Jn 12:40).⁵⁷ If the passive forms at Mk 6:52 and 8:17

⁵⁷ The active form *ἐπώρωσεν* at Jn 12:40 is a gloss for *ἐπαχύνθη* at Is 6:10 and makes God's agency in this hardening explicit. On Is 6:9-10 as a textual locus for early Christian reflection on the rejection of

evoke something of this idea, then Luke's more developed sense of divine sovereignty over human understanding may be a development of Mark's presentation, rather than an innovation.

4.3.3.7 Misunderstanding the Third Passion Prediction – Mk 10:33-34 / Lk 18:31-34

In Mark, the account of Jesus' final passion prediction does not include any statement of the narrator about the disciples' failure to understand. Luke, however, inserts a lengthy statement that echoes the disciples' response to the second prediction: "But they understood nothing of these things (οὐδὲν τούτων συνῆκαν), and this matter was hidden from them (ἦν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο κεκρυμμένον), and they did not understand what was said" (18:34; cf. Lk 9:45: οἱ δὲ ἠγγνόουν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο). Jesus' third passion prediction, left without authorial comment by Mark, is thus presented in Luke with a triple statement of apostolic ignorance.

Instead of an authorial comment, Mark follows the third passion prediction with the request of James and John to sit at Jesus' right hand (Mk 10:35-41), which presents Jesus with an opportunity to further instruct the twelve in the way of cruciform discipleship (vv.42-45). Giles observes that Luke "omits this story at this point and

Jesus, see Craig A. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive: Isaiah 6.9-10 in Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation*, JSOTSupp 64 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989).

explains the disciples' inability to comprehend as due to the fact that it was 'hid from them.'"⁵⁸ This redaction is supposed to function as part of Luke's systematic improvement of Mark's portrait of the disciples. While Giles is correct to identify the motif of divine concealment in Lk 18:34, he fails to observe that this statement is flanked by two claims about the disciples' ignorance. The effect of Luke's redaction is thus not a morally improved picture relative to Mark but a focusing on the disciples' ignorance in Lk 18:34 and a heightening of the blindness and hubris of the twelve in 22:24. Luke's relocation of the Markan dispute about greatness to the last supper contrasts the disciples' divisive, selfish ambition with Jesus' self-giving death symbolized in the Eucharist, a symbol of Christian unity (Lk 22:24-30; cf. 1Cor 10:17). This contrast highlights the need for the disciples to follow the example of Jesus (so 22:26-27). This final passion prediction thus demonstrates the degree of Luke's agreement with and development of the Markan critique of the disciples' human frailty.

⁵⁸ Giles, "The Church," 131. Giles states in a footnote that Luke included the episode of Mk 10:35-41 in modified form at Lk 22:24-30. However, the dispute about which of the twelve should be considered the greatest (τίς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μείζων, 22:24) is more likely dependent on Mk 9:34 (διελέχθησαν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ τίς μείζων).

4.3.3.8 The Mount of Olives and Gethsemane – Mk 14:26-42 / Lk 22:39-47

One of the most striking differences between Jesus' predictions of his passion in Mark and Luke is the absence in Luke of Jesus' statement, "you will all fall away (πάντες σκανδαλισθήσεσθε), for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered'" (Mk 14:27, cf. Zech 13:7). The absence of this statement, coupled with Luke's omission of the statement in Mk 14:50 ("and all forsook him and fled"), has prompted the judgment that Luke wishes to avoid the image that the disciples abandoned Jesus but rather to present them as "pillars of rectitude."⁵⁹ It is true that Luke does not narrate the abandonment of Jesus by the twelve as a whole; they appear instead to be included in Lk 23:49 with "his acquaintances and the women" who stand observing his crucifixion. Yet they do so "from far away" (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν) and so appear only slightly more heroic than their Markan counterparts. This impotent observance of their master's death, coupled by their later disbelief in his resurrection (24:11, 25, 38) suggests that the disciples are, in fact, "scandalized" by the crucifixion in Luke as in Mark.⁶⁰

Prior to Jesus' arrest in both Mark and Luke, the disciples fail to support Jesus in prayer in Gethsemane, falling asleep instead. But while the disciples are found simply

⁵⁹ Giles, "The Church," 131.

⁶⁰ This scandalization has been anticipated in Jesus' prediction of Satan's "sifting" of the twelve (Lk 22:31), an image that only slightly modifies the Markan image of scattered sheep.

sleeping in Mk 14:37, Luke states that they slept “because of sorrow” (ἀπὸ τῆς λύπης, Lk 22:45). For Giles, this explanation by Luke excludes the possibility of “weakness or indifference” among the disciples and manifests a clear distinction from Mark’s portrait of the evidently weak and indifferent disciples.⁶¹ But while indifference is hardly present in the Lukan Gethsemane scene, weakness seems to be implicit in the disciples’ inability to keep themselves awake. Moreover, as Bovon observes, the term λύπη can denote burdensome pain as well as sadness.⁶² If this meaning were allowed here, it could refer to simple fatigue—the toil of remaining with Jesus through the night, as appears to have been the case in Mark.⁶³ On the other hand, it is possible that Luke understood the otherwise unattested phrase “their eyes were heavy” in Mk 14:40 to refer not to fatigue but to the sadness associated with weeping. In any case, his alteration provides little more than a slight element of humanization in a scene that presents the

⁶¹ Giles, “The Church,” 131.

⁶² Bovon nevertheless considers the disciples to be suffering from sadness that leads to fatigue. In this way, “Luke makes an excuse for them” (*Luke* 3, 203).

⁶³ It was, after all, the middle of the night when most people sleep (or so thought Luke; cf. Lk 22:53). Luke omits the statement of Jesus at Mk 14:38, “the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,” which, had he included it, would certainly have been taken by Giles as evidence of Luke’s concern to vindicate the disciples’ good intentions. As it is omitted by Luke from Mark’s account, however, that omission counts *against* the theory of a more sanguine picture of the disciples in Luke.

disciples' repeated failure. Whatever Luke meant at 22:45, Jesus' rebuke in the following verse admits no excuse.

The same proclivity to exaggeration attends Giles's observation that the Lukan Jesus, without any "note of rebuke," asks only "a simple question" when he finds the disciples asleep: "Why are you sleeping? Stand up and pray, so that you will not fall into temptation!" (τί καθεύδετε; ἀναστάντες προσεύχεσθε, ἵνα μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν, 22:46).⁶⁴ This "simple question" shortens the question addressed to Peter in Mark: "Are you asleep? Were you not able to keep awake for one hour? Stay awake and pray that you not fall into temptation!" (καθεύδεις; οὐκ ἴσχυσας μίαν ὥραν γρηγορῆσαι; γρηγορεῖτε καὶ προσεύχεσθε, ἵνα μὴ ἔλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν, Mk 14:37-38). There is no substantial difference between these rhetorical questions; the familiar motif of a questioning, rebuking Jesus is present in both gospels in response to the disciples' failure to keep Jesus' command (to pray at Lk 22:40; cf. Mk 14:34b, "stay awake"). The Markan passage has been shortened by Luke and some of its elements have been reconfigured,⁶⁵ but the central failure of the disciples has been retained. This

⁶⁴ Giles, "The Church," 131

⁶⁵ The double echo of the Lord's prayer in Lk 22:40, 46 // Lk 11:4, suggests that Luke's shaping of the episode offers an oblique instruction in the way of discipleship, rather than a vindication of the disciples (cf. Mt 26:42 // Mt 6:10).

failure, for Luke, is the failure of the group of disciples *as a whole*, rather than of Peter, James and John alone, as in Mk 14:33.

Giles observes that in Lk 22:4-50 the disciples, following Jesus' prayer in the garden, "rush to Jesus' assistance as the arrest takes place," and this paraphrase presents the disciples as exemplars of heroic fidelity. Yet a comparison of Luke with Mark reveals that the only difference between the actions of the disciples at the scene of arrest is the Lukan addition of the question, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" (22:49). In both gospels an unnamed disciple strikes a servant of the high priest. In Luke, Jesus *rebukes* this action and heals the man, whereas in Mark he simply proceeds to rebuke the mob. The disciples' desire to defend Jesus is thus explicitly marked as a *mistake* in Luke.

4.3.3.9 The Women and the Eleven – Mk 16:1-8 / Lk 24:1-11

This survey of Luke's redaction of Mark's critique of the disciples has shown that Luke not infrequently relocates the negative elements in Mark's portrait of the twelve to the final chapters of his gospel, particularly the uniquely Lukan resurrection narratives. In these scenes—the most extensive collection of resurrection appearance stories in the synoptic tradition—the apostles are consistently portrayed as culpable through their disbelief in Jesus' resurrection (Lk 24:11, 25, 37-38; cf. v.41). But things are much different with the women followers of Jesus.

Luke's story of the empty tomb, for example, begins as a retelling of Mark 16:1-8. Following the attendance of the women at the burial of Jesus, they prepare for his embalment before observing a faithful Sabbath rest, after which they approach the tomb early "on the first day of the week" (Lk 23:55-24:2; cf. Mk 15:47-16:2). In Mark, Jesus has been accompanied by a large group of women (πολλαί) from Galilee to Jerusalem (Mk 15:41; cf. Lk 8:3—ἐτεροι πολλαί), but only three women are present at the tomb on Easter morning: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome (Mk 16:1). In Luke, however, the tomb is visited by Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, "and the others with them" (καὶ αἱ λοιπαὶ σὺν αὐταῖς, 24:10). These "others" are "the women who followed him from Galilee," (γυναῖκες αἱ συνακολουθοῦσαι αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας, 23:49) and who observed his crucifixion and burial (23:55).⁶⁶ Luke thus portrays the Easter morning devotees as a large group of Jesus' female followers.⁶⁷ When, upon reaching the tomb and finding it empty, this

⁶⁶ At Mk 15:47 only two women, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James (cf. Mk 6:3!), observe Jesus' burial, while at Lk 23:55 it is the entire accompanying body of female followers.

⁶⁷ This is Luke's preferred way of designating of these women—perhaps following Mk 15:41. The fact that Tabitha, the only female referred to by Luke as a "disciple," is called a μαθήτρια suggests that for Luke the singular μαθητής was gendered (Acts 9:36). However, τοὺς μαθητάς at Acts 9:1-2 explicitly includes both "men and women," suggesting that the large crowds of disciples in the gospel contained, in Luke's view, both men and women (hence the explicit inclusion of many women in the summary at Lk 8:1-3 (cf. Acts 2:18, 5:14).

group of women is met by two men in bright clothes, they are afraid, as in Mark (Lk 24:2-5: ἐμφοβῶν; cf. Mk 16:8: ἐφοβοῦντο). Yet after hearing the message of Jesus' resurrection, the women respond much differently than in Mark. The Markan women, despite having been commissioned to relay a report to the male disciples with instructions about meeting Jesus in Galilee, "said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid," (16:7-8). The women in Luke, however, are told only to "remember" Jesus' words (24:6). As they do this, they infer the need to announce the resurrection, "and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest" (24:8-9). Though they are ignored by the disciples (24:11), the reader understands that their message is true and that their rejection by the eleven is a mistake. This is made clear in the episode on the Emmaus road, where Cleopas and his companion recount their amazed disbelief of the testimony of "certain women among us" whose story of the empty tomb, though confirmed by the male disciples, nevertheless did not persuade them that Jesus had risen: "We *had* hoped (ἠλπίζομεν) that he was the one..." (24:21-24). This report of their rejection of the women's testimony prompts the resurrected Jesus' stern rebuke: "O how foolish you are and slow of heart...!" (24:25). Through this narration of the disbelief of the disciples at the report of the believing women, Luke contrasts the male and female followers of Jesus. Through this contrast, Luke highlights,

in a way unique to the gospel tradition but with discernible precedent in the portrayal of the disciples in Mark, the stubborn refusal (or inability) of the apostles to believe.⁶⁸

4.3.3.10 Conclusion: Luke's Critique of the Twelve

Because redaction criticism functions by closely comparing particular portions of texts with one another, it is especially susceptible to atomism (the failure to weigh each act of redaction in light of the whole narrative in which it occurs) and, because of the myopia that atomism creates, to confirmation bias (the tendency, to which all human beings, including scholars, are prone, to find what they are looking for). The stark disagreement between the redaction-critical judgments offered in the present section and those put forward by Giles demonstrates the importance of embedding redaction-critical analysis in a broader apprehension of a biblical text's literary and theological character.⁶⁹ The following conclusions regarding Luke's redaction of the Markan

⁶⁸ The later addition to Mark thus summarizes well the meaning of Lukan story on which it is dependent: "Jesus reproached their unbelief and hardheartedness, for they did not believe those who saw him risen" (Mk 16:14). This longer ending to Mark is likely an early pastiche combining elements from Lk 24:9-43 with material from the resurrection scenes in Matthew and John. See Marcus, *Mark*, 2:1090

⁶⁹ The present study has focused on Giles's treatment of Luke's redaction for the sake of illustrating the problems with an insufficiently critical approach to such analysis and the necessity of charting an improved redactional profile for the third evangelist. If Giles's exegetical judgments are representative of a tendency of redaction criticism to confirm its theories through atomistic analysis, the remedy, as Black

portrait of the disciples are, it is hoped, free from caricature: Luke has indeed modified Mark's portrait of the disciples, but this modification cannot be easily characterized. Luke omits several Markan episodes and sayings in which the failures of the disciples are emphasized (e.g. Mk 10:35-41; 14:27, 50), but he also introduces new episodes that show the failures of the disciples differently (Lk 9:52-55; 22:31-32). In the episodes common to Mark, Luke sometimes shapes the material in a way that would be meaningful for the later church (e.g. the insertion of "daily" at Lk 9:23 // Mk 8:34), but he frequently retains Mark's depiction of the disciples without substantial adjustment, even when the motive for that retention is difficult to discern (e.g. Lk 9:33 // Mk 9:5-6).⁷⁰ At other times he omits scenes that might have been meaningful for his purposes, such as the healing of the daughter of the Syrophenician woman, a gentile (Mk 7:26-30). Such

suggests, may lie not in the abandonment of the enterprise but in a self-critical approach that integrates redaction critical observations with other modes of analysis. See Black, *The Disciples According to Mark*, 288-296.

⁷⁰ Peter's suggestion of building three tabernacles on the mount of transfiguration is retained despite its irrelevance for the church. Appropriately, Luke retains the Markan comment that Peter was not sure why he said this.

variations in an author's editorial habits should caution against exaggerated claims about a theological tendency observable through a consistent pattern of redaction.⁷¹

There is one Lukan tendency, however, that we have observed with some consistency. Luke's portrayal of the failure of the disciples is particularly concentrated in Lk 24 in the report of the women and the scenes of Jesus' resurrection appearances. Here Luke presents special material that showcases the slowness of the male disciples to believe (24:13-43) and modifies Mark's account of the empty tomb to draw attention to their failure (24:6-11). He even appears to have reworked elements from scenes of the disciples' failure that occurred earlier in Mark's gospel into an account of their failure to recognize Jesus' resurrection (Lk 24:36-37 // Mk 6:47-52; Lk 24:38 // Mk 4:40; Lk 24:45 // Mk 4:34). If we seek to discern a distinctly *Lukan* response to Mark's negative portrait of the disciples, we must conclude that it consists in a *focusing* on the failures of the disciples in the days after Jesus' resurrection, rather than during the course of his ministry or at his passion (where, as we have observed, their failures are nevertheless present). This observation should cause us to consider skeptically the following claim of Giles: "Luke understands that if his readers are to identify with the disciples and see in them a model of what the Church should be like in prosperity and adversity, then their

⁷¹ A similar caution is given with regard to assessments of developments in the synoptic traditions more generally in E.P. Sanders, *Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition*, SNTSMS 9 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 272-285.

strengths and not their weaknesses must be highlighted.”⁷² We have observed at length how this statement fails to account for the way Luke actually portrays the disciples. Nevertheless, Giles rightly recognizes that Luke, like the other evangelists, wrote down stories about Jesus and the disciples to serve a function in the life of the church. We must therefore examine how Luke portrays the disciples in relation to the later community of the church. After so doing we will be better positioned to consider how Luke portrays the identity of the nascent Christian community in relation to those who remain outside its life and faith.

4.4 Jesus, the Apostles, and the Church

4.4.1 A Community Formed through a Division within Israel

As Lohfink has observed, Luke frequently presents Jesus speaking before “the people” in Luke, as opposed to “the crowds” in Mark, so that in his gospel Jesus is figured symbolically as speaking to all Israel, demonstrating God’s fidelity to the nation and calling it to discipleship (cf. Lk 7:16).⁷³ This call prompts a widely successful response among the people (12:1), so that a great number of disciples accompanies Jesus and the twelve throughout his ministry (cf. 6:17, 19:37). The association of the disciples

⁷² Giles, “The Church,” 132.

⁷³ Lohfink, *Sammlung*, 76.

with the people does not, however, imply an absence of distinction. Rather, beginning with the prophetic poetry of the birth canticles, climaxing in Simeon's prophecy of "the falling and rising of many in Israel" (2:34), Jesus is portrayed as creating division in Israel.⁷⁴ While this division does not issue in the formation of a distinct community until the period described in Acts,⁷⁵ we must nevertheless examine how a nascent communal identity is anticipated in several passages that manifest an awareness of a distinct, growing communal identity within Israelite national identity.

Luke alone includes Jesus' organization of a large group of disciples to preach and heal among all the towns where he intends to go (Lk 10:1-12). After narrating the return of the seventy (-two), Luke records Jesus' rejoicing over the apparent success of their mission:

At that very hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, "I acclaim you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and revealed them to children. Yes, Father, for this has been pleasing to you. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is

⁷⁴ As argued by Jervell, *Luke and the People of God*, 41-74.

⁷⁵ So Lohfink, *Sammlung*, 85-92.

except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” (Lk 10:21-22)

This prayer is paralleled nearly exactly in Mt 11:25-27 and bears a marked similarity to the claims made in the fourth gospel (Jn 5:19-27; 17:1-2; cf. 3:35). It would not be surprising, therefore, if we were to conclude that Luke intended a polemical inflection in the epistemic difference between the “wise and intelligent,” from whom the things of the kingdom are hidden, and the “children” who have access to the revelation of the Father through the exclusive disclosure of the Son.

Susan Wendel cites this passage and the reference to “prophets and kings” in 10:23-24 as support for the thesis that Luke, like Justin Martyr, “lay[s] claim to the Jewish scriptures *in order to define the identity of the Christ-believing community in relation to Jews.*”⁷⁶ For Wendel, a sociological concern for defining group identity lies behind and explains the presentation of scriptural interpretation in Luke-Acts. Scriptural interpretation, in Wendel’s view, functions as “a defining characteristic of the Christ-believing community: those who understood the scriptures, and the message of God, formed part of the true people of God whereas those who did not were excluded.”⁷⁷ For

⁷⁶ Susan Wendel, *Scriptural Interpretation and Community Self-Definition in Luke-Acts and the Writings of Justin Martyr*, NovTSup 139 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 279, italics added. Cf. p.103.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 207.

Wendel, Luke and Justin differ in their mode of excluding Jews: Justin univocally denounces the unbelief of “the Jews” and regards Jewish Christianity as an anomaly, while Luke’s narrative is concerned with differentiating the true heirs of Israel’s legacy, Jewish Christians, from non-Christian Judaism.⁷⁸ But the purpose of both writers is to show that their authorized interpreters of scripture are superior to those of outside groups and, thereby, to “strengthen the identity of the Christ-believing community as the only group that truly understands the Jewish scriptures and the will of God.”⁷⁹

Wendel’s attempt to integrate the interpretation of biblical texts with their social function is salutary, but the exegetical underpinnings of her integration are weak. With regard to Lk 10:21-24, for example, the text is cited in a chapter entitled “Exegesis and Community Identity in the Writings of Luke and Justin,” but the connection between revelation and community identity is not demonstrated. The equation of the “wise and learned” from whom God has hidden the revelation with non-Christian Jews who have a competing vision of God’s revelation is simply assumed.⁸⁰ But as Wendel’s thesis and

⁷⁸ Ibid., 281. Wendel rightly perceives that for Luke, unlike Justin, gentile Christians do not claim for themselves, over against the Jews, the promises of Israel’s scripture *in toto* but rather are the heirs of promises made in Israel’s scriptures to gentiles (*Scriptural Interpretation*, 207-278).

⁷⁹ Ibid., 280.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 103-123; cf. the assertion on p.151: “Luke depicts a competition between Christ-believers and other Jews for primacy over the same sacred texts.” Despite ample discussion of Luke’s hermeneutical

the text of Lk 10:21-24 raise important questions, the following exegetical observations may be made in response to her assertions.

On the level of the Christian community's self-understanding, the text she cites may well function to commend childlike trust and a childlike approach to challenging hermeneutical questions posed by outsiders. In the immediately following passage, the presence of a lawyer who wishes to test Jesus by means of a debate over Torah naturally facilitates a contrast between the simple community of disciples, who live in accord with the Torah's central commands of love for God and neighbor, and non-Christian Jewish neighbors whose Torah study, like the lawyer's question, rejects such simplicity (cf. Tit 3:9). The lawyer's interpretive challenge and the parable of the Samaritan that answers it thus facilitates a contrast between the unlearned simplicity of "children" and the learned casuistry of the "wise and intelligent." However, Wendel's claim that Jesus is here galvanizing the disciples for an interpretive identity competition with non-Christian Judaism goes beyond such a reading and asserts that what is primary here is the need to justify and defend communal identity through hermeneutical debate. This claim conflates the narrative context of Luke's gospel with the social context in which

interests and the divisive hermeneutics of the "sect" of the Christians (cf. her clear discussion of Acts 3:22-23 on pp.191-192), Wendel adduces little evidence for her claim that Luke is depicting an interpretive *competition*, much less than he is vying, like Justin and the later apologists, for interpretive primacy.

Luke wrote, a context that, for Wendel, is an argumentative encounter like that which frames Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*. But the following set of considerations weighs against reading Lk 10:21-24 as principally oriented toward explicating the relation of Luke's community to non-Christian Jewish others.

As we have already observed, Luke follows Jesus' exultation at the return of the seventy with the private word of blessing to his disciples. This blessing occurs in Matthew following a lengthy citation of Is 6:9-10, which is applied to the people's failure to understand the parables (Mt 13:13-17). The preceding exultation, however, occurs in another context in Matthew, as the table below indicates:

Table 3: Thanksgiving and Blessing of the Disciples

Matthew	Mark	Luke
<p>11:25-27 At that time Jesus said,</p> <p>“I acclaim you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.</p> <p>13:10-17 Then the disciples came and asked him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” He answered, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. The reason I speak to them in parables is that ‘seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.’ ...</p> <p>But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>4:10-12 When he was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; in order that ‘they may indeed look, but not perceive, and may indeed listen, but not understand; so that they may not turn again and be forgiven.’”</p> <p>-----</p>	<p>10:21-22 At that very hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, “I acclaim you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and revealed them to children. Yes, Father, for this has been pleasing to you. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”</p> <p>10:23-24 And turning to the disciples privately, he said “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you, many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but they did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but they did not hear it.”</p>

It is likely that in this portion of double tradition Luke and Matthew each preserve elements of an older arrangement, in which the thanksgiving and blessing of Jesus were combined with each other (as they are in Lk 10:21-24) and with the explanation of the purpose of the parables by reference to Is 6:10 (as the blessing is in Mt 13:16-17). Five observations make plausible this reconstruction:

1) The epistemic division at Lk 10:21-22 // Mt 11:25-27 appears suitable to a context that explicates that division (such as in Mk 4:10-11 // Mt 13:10-17), but Luke provides no such context beyond the juxtaposition to the peculiarly Lukan version of the conversation with the lawyer in Lk 10:25-37, which is hardly its original context. The denunciation of the cities of Galilee in Matthew likewise does not frame the contrast between children and the wise and intelligent.

2) Is 6:9-10, a prominent text in the gospel tradition, explicitly discusses the hiding of revelation from the people who should apprehend it but do not “understand (συνῶσιν) with their hearts and turn” (e.g. the “wise and intelligent” — σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν, Lk 10:21 // Mt 11:25). It would be natural, then, for this thanksgiving to occur in the context of a citation of Is 6:9-10.

3) This phrase from Lk 10:21 // Mt 11:25 alludes to a saying elsewhere in Isaiah: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the understanding I will hide” (ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν κρύψω, Is 29:14; cf. ἀπέκρυψας ταῦτα, Lk 10:21). Prior to the writing of the gospels, Is 29:14 was a

site for reflection upon the lowly state of a church whose gospel was rejected by scribes and debaters (1Cor 1:18-29). There are thus close verbal and conceptual associations between Jesus' exultation in Lk 10:21-22 // Mt 11:25-27 and Is 6:9-10 and Is 29:14. The Isaianic character of the motif of a divine decision to hide revelation from the wise would naturally suggest a setting for the saying of Jesus in proximity to a citation of Isaiah. However, neither gospel includes such a setting.⁸¹

4) When Jesus blesses the disciples (Lk 10:23-24), that blessing speaks of eyes that see and ears that hear—imagery strongly reminiscent of Is 6:9-10. This association is evident in the collocation in Mt 13:10-17 of the blessing and the purpose of the parables with Matthew's citation of Isaiah.

5) Mark, the source of the correlation of Is 6:10 with the purpose of the parables in Luke and Matthew, includes a statement in proximity to Mk 4:10-12 in which Jesus speaks *privately*, explaining "everything" to his disciples (κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς ἰδίοις μαθηταῖς ἐπέλυεν πάντα, Mk 4:33-34). This statement reads like an abbreviated form of Jesus' private address to his disciples in Lk 10:23 (πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς κατ' ἰδίαν εἶπεν...) extolling the blessedness of their perception. This Markan structure, in which a private comment is made to the disciples following his declaration that the revelation

⁸¹ The argument that Luke does not intend the contrast in Jesus' prayer at Lk 10:21-22 to be between the church and Israel thus carries some weight even if the present reconstruction is incorrect, for Luke could have associated Jesus' prayer with a citation of Is 6:10, but he does not.

has been hidden from others is thus present in Lk 10:21-24. As the statement in Mk 4:34 that Jesus disclosed everything to his disciples privately stands at some distance from Mark's redactional tendency to present the disciples as failing to apprehend Jesus' teaching, it may be that Mk 4:34 abbreviates an earlier tradition, such as that present at Lk 10:23-24.

The Lukan correlation of the saying at 10:21-22 with the blessing at 10:23-24 thus appears to be the older form of the two sayings, mirroring the structure evident in the progression of Mark 4:10-12 to 4:33-34. However, these two logia (now separate in Matthew but originally connected) were likely connected as well with the citation of Is 6:10 (as the latter still is in Mt 13:10-17). This connection is consistent with the structure and content of Mk 4:10-34, even though Mark is not the source of either saying.⁸²

If this reconstruction is correct, Luke's redaction of the earlier source has involved a removal of the sayings now present at Lk 10:21-24 from a context in which they expressed a clear division between the disciples and "the people" and were understood in light of Is 6:9-10, which is addressed "to this people" (τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ).

⁸² The original form of the sayings may thus be accounted for on the postulation of an overlap between Mark and Q. This judgment is reached not because such an overlap is necessary on the grounds of the presumption that Luke could not have known Matthew but rather because Luke and Matthew each appear to preserve portions of an older configuration of the tradition, a configuration that is paralleled, but not present, in Mark.

But if Luke has removed the thanksgiving expression, an epistemic division, and a blessing of the disciples' perception from a context and biblical intertext that explicates the fate of those who do *not* share that perception, this view of his redaction renders implausible the suggestion that a social need for communal definition stands behind his inclusion of the poetic thanksgiving and blessing in Lk 10:21-24. Luke's portrayal of Gamaliel reminds us that there are at least some "wise and intelligent" Jews outside the church who are not entirely mistaken about the ways of God. And if Jesus' parting word to the lawyer at 10:37 is taken seriously, the epistemic dualities expressed in 10:21-24 may not be final or absolute; rather, Jesus may be instructing the temporarily benighted lawyer in the way of childlike obedience (cf. Mt 18:3).

If, as is likely, the lawyer in this story was meant to be understood by Luke's readers as standing for contemporary Jews of some stripe (non-Christian or Christian), the parable may have served not to finally denounce such Jews but to call them to take up a Torah praxis that prioritized mercy in imitation of the Samaritan (a gentile). Although the parable presupposes and addresses differences between Christian and non-Christian Jewish interpretations of Torah, it is focused on correcting what Luke regards as a misguided viewpoint, rather than on differentiating those who hold different positions on the Torah from one another. And although the parable does serve to commend the generous love of neighbor commanded by the Torah as a chief feature of Christian life, it does not for that reason have as its chief purpose the construction of

Christian identity in contradistinction from non-Christian Jews. Rather, the parenthetic word on which the parable ends would seem to express a hope for the correction of those whose Torah piety Luke regards as misguided: “Go and do likewise.”

With regard to the parable of the sower, Wendel argues that the identification of the seed as the “word of God” (8:11) lays the ground for a portrayal of the church, in and through which the word of God spreads (Acts 6:7, 12:24), as the “good soil.”⁸³ This reading of the church as the good soil does not reckon with the fact that Luke is deeply concerned that Christians, like the plants rooted in thorny soil, may also be “choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life” (8:14, cf. Lk 12:33, 45-46, Acts 5:1-11) or with Luke’s lack of concern to specify a connection between the various other types of soil and non-Christian Jews. The ecclesial significance of the parable is thus not framed in contrast to any particularly developed alterity. The same qualifications are true with regard to Wendel’s reading of Jesus’ renunciation of his mothers and brothers in Lk 8:19-21 in favor of “a different boundary marker—hearing and obeying the message of God.”⁸⁴ When one has decided that what is important to Luke is drawing community boundaries, the meaning of Lk 8:19-21 has also been decided. But if this assumption is interrogated, it becomes clear that the pericope does not supply any specific social content to frame Jesus’ statement. Instead, the saying functions to call Jesus’ would-be

⁸³ Wendel, *Scriptural Interpretation*, 167-68.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 183.

followers to an authentic discipleship expressed in action, rather than verbal claims of association with Jesus (cf. Lk 6:46, 13:26). To read the logion as demarcating Luke's community over against non-Christian Judaism only works if one knows beforehand that Luke is concerned with this.

The consciousness of a nascent communal identity in the gospel is perhaps most clearly evident in the Lukan Jesus' word of consolation, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," for here the kingdom is said to be the property of the disciples (12:32). But the image of a flock, a potent metaphor for the church, is here contrasted not with Israel but with the "nations of the world" (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τοῦ κόσμου) who strive after the necessities of life and so serve as a negative contrast to the disciples' path of singular devotion to the kingdom of God (12:30-31). A similar contrast between the apostles and "the kings of the gentiles" is drawn by Jesus at the Passover meal to illustrate the ethic that is to characterize Christian discipleship. The self-interested system of Greco-Roman benefaction is the negative example against which the twelve are encouraged to conceive their role: "Not so with you!" (ὕμεις δὲ οὐχ οὕτως, 22:26a). This injunction is given particularly with regard to the *leadership* that the twelve will exercise in the life of the early church: "The leader (ὁ ἡγούμενος) must become like the one who serves," (22:26b). There is thus an important element of *Gemeindebildung* in these sayings, but the contrast that serves to delineate the shape of

Christian identity is not with Jews, Jewish teachings, or Jewish institutions, but with the mode of life in the gentile world.

Directly before and after this contrast with gentiles, however, Jesus indicates the relation of the twelve apostles to the people of Israel. After supper, the Lukan Jesus offers a Eucharistic meal to the disciples in language that blends Markan tradition with an early Christian practice discernible from Paul's writings: "This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me." And after supper, [he took] the cup, saying, "This cup is the *new* covenant in my blood, which is poured out *for you*" (Lk 22:19-20; cf. Mk 14:22-24, 1Cor 11:24-25). The language of a "new covenant" does not indicate an absolute departure from Israel's first covenant; rather, Luke's Jesus, like Paul, employs the language of Jeremiah to denote the significance of Jesus' last meal (see Jer 38:31 LXX). In the elements of the meal, which foreshadow Jesus' passion, the covenantal relation of God to the people of Israel is said to subsist bodily in the flesh and blood of Jesus. For Luke, unlike Mark or Mathew, Jesus' paschal meal does not simply foreshadow the Christian Eucharist and interpret Jesus' death. It does that, but the allusion to Jeremiah deepens the meaning of the meal so that a new era, the era of the new covenant, is intimated. Jesus' statement that his blood is poured out for the *disciples* (τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον) rather than simply "for many" (cf. Mk 14:24; Mt 26:28) anticipates the community that will take shape from their ministry as the Spirit is "poured out" upon them (cf. Acts 2:17-18, 33; 10:45).

This “you” for whom Jesus’ blood is poured out either stands over against Israel as an alternative covenanted entity, or else it simply *stands for* Israel, which is now said to enter into a new covenant in Jesus’ blood. The latter possibility is in keeping with the plainer sense of Jeremiah’s prophecy of a new covenant with “the house of Israel and the house of Judah” (Jer 38:31 LXX). It is also in keeping with Lohfink’s observation that the twelve are symbolically figured as standing at the head of the gathered people as a whole. The scene of the words of institution can, on its own, be read in either sense. But the likelihood that the apostles stand in unbroken continuity with Israel is strengthened by the further statement of Jesus that his disciples will occupy the kingly thrones of the twelve tribes of Israel:

You are those who have endured with me in my trials, and I myself impart you to, just as my Father imparted to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you shall sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (καθήσεσθε ἐπὶ θρόνων τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς κρίνοντες τοῦ Ἰσραήλ). (Luke 22:28-30)⁸⁵

⁸⁵ As Jervell has argued, the replacement of Judas by Matthias in Acts 1:15-26 demonstrates Luke’s attention to the symbolic number of Israel’s patriarchs (“The Twelve on Israel’s Thrones: Luke’s Understanding of the Apostolate,” in *Luke and the People of God*, 75-112).

The “judging” spoken of here is not condemnation but rather symbolic jurisdiction. The notion that Jesus’ twelve apostles are the figureheads of Israel is in keeping with the outlook of the Lukan Paul, for whom the promise to the patriarchs is one of resurrection, which “our twelve tribes hope to obtain, earnestly worshipping God day and night” (Acts 26:7, cf. v.8).⁸⁶ Luke is aware that not all the members of the twelve tribes agree with his interpretation of their worship, but he nonetheless perceives in that worship the adumbration of the death and resurrection of Jesus, toward which it points unawares. The statement that the twelve will preside over Israel upon the thrones of the patriarchs is thus a claim to embody, rather than discard, Israel’s identity. This claim is reasonably perceived from the outside as sectarian (so Acts 24:14), and though Luke does not accept the designation but rather stresses that Christianity is the true way of God in conformity with the law and prophets, he nevertheless acknowledges, with a measure of sensitivity to the perspective of Jewish outsiders, that his is a “sect everywhere spoken against” (Acts 28:22). Though aware of the audacity of his claim, Luke appears to understand the “new covenant” of Jesus not as the abrogation of God’s fidelity to Israel but as the way of naming the conviction that God’s covenantal relation

⁸⁶ Paul’s insistence on this point is not incredible, for resurrection has a prominent place in the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic Judaism. See Jon Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

to Israel has become embodied in the person of Jesus and, derivatively, in the community he inhabits.

4.4.2 A Community Called to Discipleship

The language of *hope* in the several Lukan articulations of Israel's identity discussed above signals an important aspect of Luke's conception of Israelite identity: it remains partly unrealized. The intertwining of Israel and the apostolate means that the church, like the Israel it audaciously presumes to represent, exists in a sub-eschatological state. It waits for its savior from heaven (Acts 3:20-21) while its teachers strive to convince their fellow Jews of the nature of their common hope. The lack of closure to the story, coupled with the death of the twelve apostles already foreshadowed in the martyrdom of James (Acts 12:2), means that the church, for Luke, is subject to a progressive historical development "on the way" to the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). As such, it is a community in process of continual formation, for whose members the designation "children of the Most High" is not a status to be presumed but a goal reserved, in some measure, for the future (ἔσται ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν πολὺς, καὶ ἔσεσθε υἱοὶ ὑψίστου, Lk 6:35). There remains the serious possibility that among those who wish to accompany Jesus there may be found many unable to become his disciples (14:25-33). Even those who are already disciples are encouraged to view their discipleship as preparatory for entry into the kingdom of God, rather than a matter of comfortable and

privileged status (διὰ πολλῶν θλίψεων δεῖ ἡμᾶς εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, Acts 14:22).

Within this process of formation there are warnings. These are issued to the church of Luke's day as much as to the disciples of Jesus' day. Among these are the words of Jesus addressed specifically to the crowd of disciples: "Woe to you who are rich...who are full now...who are laughing now" (6:20, 24-25). The prospect that the church might be populated by those who, through attachment to wealth and comfort, are examples of failed discipleship also emerges in the uniquely Lukan parable of the servants waiting for their master's return from a wedding banquet (12:35-48). When Peter asks whether the parable is about them or others, Jesus asks in return, "Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom the master will establish in his service?" (12:42). The parable thus seems to be directed not only at Peter but also at all who are appointed to positions of responsibility. The faithful servant, who diligently works while his master is away, is promised blessing and reward at his return (12:43-44). Alternatively,

If that slave says in his heart, "My lord is delayed in coming," and begins to beat the other slaves, men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk, the master (ὁ κύριος) of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him

a place with the unbelievers (τὸ μέρος αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀπίστων). (Lk 12:45-46; cf. Mt 24:45-51)

The term “unbelievers” is not derived from the parable (where the topic is the return of a master from a wedding, not belief and unbelief) but belongs to its interpretation. The parable thus refers to the second coming of Jesus. But this observation brings with it a recognition that this scene envisages the possibility that those entrusted with authority in the church may abuse that authority, mistreat those entrusted to them, and so come under judgment. This possibility – which is indeed a virtual historical certainty given the attention Luke devotes to the right use of economic resources in the church, both in the gospel and in Acts – tells us something important both about Luke’s situation (or at least the recent past as it remained important to his own situation) and about his aims in presenting Jesus’ teaching the way he does. Luke shapes and presents Jesus’ teaching, in part, to call the church of his own day to walk more faithfully in the way of discipleship. In view of Luke’s prophetic, internal critique of his own church, it is difficult to conceive of Luke as constructing Christian identity through the denigration of outsiders, for Luke’s attention is often focused on the failures not outside but within his own movement.

4.4.3 A Community Bumbling Along the Way

One additional feature of Luke's portrayal of the earliest followers of Jesus deserves brief comment. We have seen how, through his modification of Mark, Luke draws attention to the ignorance and unbelief of the disciples in a manner that focuses on their confusion in the phase of Jesus' life with which Mark's gospel does not directly deal—namely, the period after his resurrection. These portrayals correspond to several scenes in Acts that show the early Christian movement in general and the apostles in particular in situations of confusion, disunity, inconsistency, or weakness. Because of the scope of the present work, however, these examples are here discussed only briefly; a full examination of these episodes and of Acts as a whole in light of the present thesis must be left for the future. Nevertheless, a summary of the evidence from Acts will corroborate the thesis that Luke has drawn particular attention to the human limitations not only of the pre-Easter disciples but also of the post-Pentecost apostles and the disorganized, erratic movement they tried to lead, which repeatedly produced challenges and surprises for which the church was largely unprepared.

Regarding wealth and its distribution, Luke's warnings in the gospel are confirmed in Acts. While the early church shares its wealth freely (Acts 2:44-45, 4:32-35), Ananias and Sapphira bear witness to a lack of consistency and to the presence of deceit and corruption in the earliest phase of the church's life (Acts 5:1-11). The subsequent dispute between the Hellenists and Hebrews over the distribution to widows (Acts 6:1-

6) reveals not only continued inequality, and thus a measure of poverty despite the claim at Acts 4:34, but also a notable lack of harmony in a community that has become divided along lines of social difference. In each of these instances, the apostles preside over the church's errors and render judgment, but the situations often take them by surprise. The episodes themselves thus stand alongside of and, in a sense, over against, the summaries of communal life. Even if it could be demonstrated that the picture of harmony and goodwill in those summaries was the historical norm and that aberrations from it were few, the aberrations nevertheless are portrayed as originating from the earliest phase of the church's life, in close proximity to the outpouring of the Spirit.⁸⁷

Neither does Luke shy away from disclosing to his readers that the welcome of gentiles into the early fellowship of Jewish Christians was a surprising, confusing, and extensively disputed matter. None of the apostles in Luke's narrative has any inkling that Jesus will be preached among the gentiles before he receives a divine revelation of the gentile mission; Simeon's prophetic invocation of Is 49:6 appears unknown among them. In an atypical encounter, Phillip is specifically instructed by an angel to preach to the Ethiopian eunuch (8:26-40). Prior to his vision in Joppa, Peter has no intention of

⁸⁷ Such divisions are not limited to the first chapters of Acts, for the sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas over the status of John Mark leads to an historic parting between the leaders that is never reversed (15:36-40), an indication that Luke has not polished all of the rough edges from the Paul known to us from the letters.

preaching to gentiles despite an active itinerant preaching ministry (8:14-24, 9:32-43). As he states later to Cornelius, he has viewed it as “prohibited” (ἀθέμιτόν) for a Jew to associate with a gentile (10:28), and it is only because of a heavenly vision that he agrees to do so. Whatever historical merit there may be to Philip Esler’s speculation that the gentile mission had its origin in the cosmopolitan outlook of a few farsighted visionaries in the Jerusalem church, it hardly squares with the story Luke wants to tell about that mission.⁸⁸ That movement was, in Luke’s telling, a total surprise to the Jewish apostles. Although Luke could have presented the apostles remembering Jesus’ command to preach “repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations” (Lk 24:47) and doing just that, he chose to extend their ignorance of the plans of God well into his second volume.

The issues the gentile mission raises are not quickly resolved by the lengthy story of Peter’s visit to Cornelius. Peter defends his actions to a suspicious and critical church in Jerusalem (Acts 11:1-18), but even the resolution offered there is insufficient to answer the question of gentile status within the church. In Acts 15 Paul’s mission, now well under way, is called into question through “certain individuals” who teach the necessity of circumcision, leading to “no small dissention and debate” at the church in Antioch (15:1-2). The lengthy council in Jerusalem among the apostles and elders, including the luminaries Paul, Barnabas, Peter, and James, produces a great disturbance (πολλῆς

⁸⁸ Esler, *Community and Gospel*, 163, 222.

ζητήσεως, 15:7), which is resolved through a lengthy rehearsal of Peter's visit to Cornelius, which is then justified by a citation of Amos 9:11-12 that is only now understood to "agree" with what has happened in Caesarea (15:15).⁸⁹ Although the reader might expect that the second apostolic summit in Jerusalem on the issue of gentile inclusion would have served as adequate vindication of Paul's mission, in Acts 21 James reports how myriads of Jewish Christians in Jerusalem have been misled about Paul, believing that he teaches Diaspora Jews to abandon the Mosaic law and Jewish customs (21:20-21). After a failed attempt by the leader of the Jerusalem church to refute these charges by having Paul and his associates share in ritual purification (Acts 21:20-30), Paul is arrested, and the story of his attempt to vindicate his misunderstood gospel before Jews and gentiles continues with mixed results.

Nor is misunderstanding within the church confined to the issue of gentiles. The "young man named Saul" persecutes the church for reasons that remain unclear. His appearance as a major character is indeed as "one untimely born" (1Cor 15:8), for he comes to proclaim the gospel not through the missionary work of the church but in spite

⁸⁹ The report of Peter is decisive for Acts. Although the whole assembly listens to the report of Paul and Barnabas about their work among the gentiles in 15:12, the verdict of James omits any reference to this report, citing only what "Simeon has explained" (15:14).

of it. His is not the only awkward conversion.⁹⁰ Apollos is presented in glowing terms by Luke but nevertheless needs to have the way of God explained to him more accurately by Priscilla and Aquila (18:24-26). A group of disciples still following John the Baptist well after his death exclaim in perplexity, “We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit!” (19:2) and appear also not to have heard of Jesus (19:4-5). Although all is resolved in good time, and Luke is clear that God is directing the church, nevertheless the way is circuitous. At times there are divinely imposed blockades: Paul and Timothy are prevented from speaking in Asia and have their plans to go to Bithynia altered because “the spirit of Jesus would not allow them” (16:6-7). These non-linear oddities, taken cumulatively, suggest that the only character who knows what is going on in Acts, who alone is able to carry the narrative forward in any discernible direction, is the Holy Spirit. The human characters, all of whom would later be canonized as the heroes of the church, bicker with each other, are confused about the substance, scope, and terms of the mission, and generally serve to confirm the wisdom of Gamaliel: if the undertaking had been of human origin, it would have failed (cf. Acts 5:38). The work does not fail, however, and consequently Luke’s realism about the weaknesses of the church serves to confirm not the virtue or wisdom of the apostles—or, in some derivative way, of a

⁹⁰ On Luke’s “unmanly” portrayal of Paul at his conversion and elsewhere, see Wilson, *Unmanly Men*, 153-189.

community like Luke's that was historically connected to them—but the power of the Lord at work in their midst.

These observations lead to two important negative conclusions. Firstly, Luke's portrait of the disciples is not, as one would expect on a zero-sum theory of identity, dependent upon, derivative of, or integrally related to a contrast between the disciples and Jewish others. With the tradition before him, Luke is conscious of hostility against the church from non-Christian Jews (6:22, 9:5, 21:12), and he occasionally contrasts the disciples with "others" (e.g. 8:10, 10:20-24). At several points the unique role of the twelve with respect to Israel is discussed (10:21-24, 12:32, 22:28-30). But conflict is not the only or even the principle device of figuring the disciples in Luke's narrative. Where conflicts do serve to contrast the community with those outside it, the contrasts do not consistently support the thesis that Luke organizes his community's self-consciousness through differentiation from Jewish others, even on the few occasions where such contrasts may have a contemporary social significance with respect to non-Christian Jews (e.g. Lk 10:25-37). Rather, Luke frequently demonstrates the integral connection between disciples of Jesus and the people of Israel, as Israel is understood through the lens of prophetic biblical history.

Secondly, it is not true, as Gaston and Giles argue, that Luke consistently presents the disciples as heroes so that his readers can follow in their steps.⁹¹ Instead, he showcases their failures and concentrates especially on their unbelief in the scenes of resurrection appearances, in which the future leaders of the church culpably fail to acknowledge the resurrected Jesus. Jesus' followers thus exhibit their need to repent and receive greater instruction in the way of the Lord. By portraying the disciples this way, Luke presents their moral character as parallel to that of the non-Christian Jews in Luke's narrative, who are likewise called to repentance and instructed in the way of discipleship. This parallel situation of the church and non-Christian Israel, as each group stands in relation to Jesus and his demands, is confirmed through a consideration of the place of each in the salvation-historical framework of the Lukan travel narrative, to which we now turn.

⁹¹ Gaston, "Anti-Judaism," 128; Giles, "The Church in the Gospel of Luke," 130.

5. Jesus on the Way

The preceding chapters have argued that Luke's gospel presents Jesus as engaging in an extended confrontation with Israel during the course of his ministry. This confrontation, which is dramatized in Luke's distinctive shaping of the gospel tradition, creates division within Israel. Those who follow Jesus become his "disciples" who collectively form larger crowds than are visible in the other gospels and from whom the Lukan Jesus selects seventy to serve as his heralds of his arrival (10:1-20). These followers are not, however, presented as holy and exemplary champions of the early movement, as in later apocryphal acts. Even when they, like Jesus, cast out demons and are given authority "over all the power of the enemy" (10:17-19), Jesus rebukes their rejoicing in these new powers and reorients them to a posture of gratitude that their names are written in heaven (10:20). The closest, most empowered followers of Jesus are urged toward continual self-denial and formation in discipleship (9:23, 17:10), which is presented as a demanding and totalizing call of which many are incapable (14:26, 27, 33).

Another group within Israel—identifiable by various titles: scribes, lawyers, and Pharisees—also repeatedly draws near to Jesus, but these groups appear suspicious of and, in various ways, opposed to his teachings. Their opposition is demonstrated in various controversy episodes, in which Jesus' dialogue with these "opponents" frequently demonstrates his power and their errors. Luke's shaping of this material is,

however, focused on the correction of Jesus' opponents, rather than their condemnation. This is true notwithstanding the harsh woes on the Pharisees and scribes in 11:42-52, for Jesus pronounces woes upon the rich among his disciples as well (6:24-26). Against the view that Luke has written off "the Jews," Luke's gospel consistently calls Jewish "others" to repentance and discipleship, particularly through the Lukan motif of Jesus as the reproving dinner guest of Pharisees. The Lukan Jesus thus attempts, in the course of his ministry, the reclamation of the unrighteous *and the righteous* in Israel, of "all who are far away" and of those who draw near to listen (cf. Acts 2:39).

I have argued that each of these two groups, the disciples and the opponents of Jesus, signifies on two distinct levels—the level of the events in the life of Jesus that Luke narrates and the level of the social setting in which Luke writes. These levels are related but nonetheless distinguishable. The disciples refer to the historical twelve apostles together with the much wider crowds that encounter Jesus; but they also are intended to stand for the church of Luke's day, which continues to follow in the way of Jesus.⁹² Likewise the scribes, lawyers, and Pharisees refer to the historical figures and groups with whom Jesus conversed and debated during his life; yet these disputants also have

⁹² This approach to Luke is thus similar to the analysis of John's Gospel in J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, Rev. ed., NTL (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2003), who understands that narrative as a "two-level drama" portraying both the life of Jesus and that of the early Johannine church.

analogues and heirs among Jews of Luke's day, both in the church with which Luke is in communion (cf. Acts 15:5) and outside it. The episodes in Jesus' life thus constitute not only a form of gospel historiography but also, in a different register, a socially relevant allegory whose purposes this study is at pains to discern. The character of this second level of Luke's writing will be greatly clarified if we can discern the relation of the portrayals in the central section of Luke's gospel to the narrative's final climactic chapters. We begin by considering first Luke's dramatization of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

5.1 The First and Second Comings of Jesus: Reading the Lukan Travel Narrative

Beginning at Lk 9:51, less than halfway through the gospel, Luke initiates what appears to be a transition from the Galilean ministry of Jesus to his arrest, death, resurrection, and ascension: "When the days drew near for him to be taken up, Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem." What follows, however, is not a straightforward transition from Galilee to Judea but an extended collection of teaching and narrative vignettes that lack an obvious generic, literary, or topical unity. Throughout the ten chapters between Jesus' determined departure for Jerusalem and his eventual arrival there, the reader is reminded periodically that Jesus is "making his way to Jerusalem" (13:22; cf. 17:11, 18:31, 19:11, 28), but the way is long and circuitous. As the material in this section is often

absent from Mark's gospel, it appears that Luke may have chosen the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, the so-called "travel narrative," as the setting for the inclusion of material from sources shared with Matthew and those unique to Luke—that is, of traditional material that lacked a natural fit in the Markan outline. The relation of this material to the Lukan frame of the travel narrative is obscure, and out of this obscurity scholars have divined various and divergent unifying meanings of these central chapters.⁹³ As the section comprises nearly half of the gospel, such interpretations contribute substantially to overall assessments of Luke's theological outlook and rhetorical purposes.

Written over sixty years ago, the brief article by Bo Reicke, "Instruction and Discussion in the Travel Narrative," remains one of the clearest analyses of Luke's rhetorical purposes in this section.⁹⁴ Surveying these chapters, Reicke concludes that the traditions contained therein display a consistently "ecclesiastic-didactic character" that makes them useful for the instruction of early Christian missionaries, a setting Reicke

⁹³ For an overview of the problem see Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, 60-73; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:824-826. David Moessner's attempt to solve the problem through a typological reading of Jesus as the journeying guest and Prophet like Moses who embodies Israel's Exodus is hardly a *unifying* conceit but rather exhibits the way in which the travel narrative is a story "around which other motifs cluster and take on special relevance" (Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet*, 30).

⁹⁴ Bo Reicke, "Instruction and Discussion in the Travel Narrative," *SE 1*, eds. Kurt Aland et al. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959), 206-216.

judges to be a likely *Sitz im Leben* for a collection of the traditions that predates their inclusion in the travel narrative.⁹⁵ Observing that Acts 13:1 locates a teaching ministry in the context of early missionary activity, Reicke posits that the material used by Luke may have originated in Antioch or another “centre of foreign missions where it was valuable to recollect what the Lord had done and said in situations that correspond to those in which Christians ministers and missionaries found themselves.”⁹⁶ While it is doubtful that the value of “what the Lord had done and said” in these chapters was unique to “ministers and missionaries,” Reicke’s form-critical suggestion rightly seeks to coordinate the preservation and arrangement of this portion of the gospel tradition with its function in the later church.⁹⁷ That church doubtlessly experienced, as Reicke avers, both internal problems that required “instruction” in the way of discipleship and “external” troubles that required a pattern for “discussion” with outsiders.⁹⁸ The travel narrative thus displays a “rhythmical oscillation between the motifs of instruction and

⁹⁵ Reicke, “Instruction and Discussion,” 209.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 215.

⁹⁷ For a corrective to Reicke’s overly narrow assessment of the *Sitz im Leben* of didactic material in the gospel tradition, see Dahl, “Form-Critical Observations on Early Christian Preaching,” in *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church*, 30-36.

⁹⁸ Reicke, “Instruction and Discussion,” 209.

discussion,” motifs which have a discernible rhetorical function in the life of the Lukan community.⁹⁹

Reicke is relatively silent on the dynamics of the posture of the Lukan community toward Jewish outsiders; he refers only to “attacks” from “Pharisaic Jews,” whom church leaders were “expected to refute.”¹⁰⁰ From this apparently embattled position the Lukan travel narrative provides fodder for denouncing non-Christian Jewish others. The parable of the merciful Samaritan is thus “an illustration of our Lord’s discussion with Judaism... of value for those in the Church who had to discuss with Jewish lawyers and others the way to eternal life,” and the point of the parable is “that it is not the Priest and the Levite who fulfill the Law.”¹⁰¹ The context of such apparently unavoidable discussions is not considered, however. On the basis of Acts 20:7, Reicke observes in the Lukan Jesus’ *Tischreden* an anticipation of later practice internal to the Christian community, but he does not consider the possibility of commensality with Jewish outsiders.¹⁰² Such interaction appears to have been foreclosed, in Reicke’s view, on the grounds of Jewish rejection of the gospel, as is

⁹⁹ Ibid., 214; cf. the list outlining this oscillation on p.213.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 212.

¹⁰² Ibid., 214. For an alternative interpretation of the ecclesial significance of Jesus’ meals with his opponents, see Chapter 3 below.

supposedly indicated by Luke's insertion of the woes against the Galilean cities in Lk 10:13-16 within the account of the mission of the seventy(-two) in 10:1-20.¹⁰³ These and other traditions in the travel narrative function to ward off Jewish attacks and instruct the church of Luke's day in faithful discipleship. They have been inserted into the frame of a narrative of Jesus' journey in order to symbolize the essential unity of the life of the church militant with that of Jesus:

Considering the fact that the Travel Narrative contains so many traditions intended to be instructive for Christian missionaries, one may ask whether Christ is not described here as being on a pilgrimage toward suffering and glorification, because such pilgrimage is the lot of his messengers on this earth.¹⁰⁴

Against Reicke's ecclesiastical-didactic reading of the travel narrative's contemporary significance, Helmuth Egelkraut argues that the narrative anticipates

¹⁰³ This redactional judgment relies upon reading the mission of the seventy as a proto-gentile mission: "By this addition [of the woes against Jewish cities of Galilee into this context] Luke has indicated that foreign missions became necessary because of the disobedience of those who were in the immediate environment of Jesus" ("Instruction and Discussion," 212). This judgment ignores, however, that the seventy are sent "to every town and place where Jesus himself intended to go" (10:1)—i.e. other Jewish towns in Jesus' "immediate environment."

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 214.

Jesus' historical rejection in Jerusalem. The protraction of Jesus' extended entrance into the city allows Luke to dramatize the encounter: "As Jesus moves toward Jerusalem the final hour of grace has begun for Israel. It is called to a decision in the face of what God does in Jesus. The *kairos* will expire as Jesus enters Jerusalem and finds no acceptance."¹⁰⁵ The existence of the travel narrative thus provides a salvation-historical logic for the disinheritance of "old Israel" by the church:

In the TN [= Travel Narrative] Lk wants to report how the rejection of Israel came about. Jesus came as the Messiah of Israel ... But whatever he did, Israel exhibited nothing but opposition to him.... Israel's rôle is finished. The establishment of a new community of God from that which is not Israel and in the very matrix of Israel ... confirms the dismissal of the old.... Lk wants to write the history of rejection, an *Unheilsgeschichte*, in a sense, in the TN.¹⁰⁶

Egelkraut's redaction-critical approach to the travel narrative is salutary. He rightly observes that in these chapters Luke gives distinctive shape to earlier tradition, foreshadowing Jesus' confrontation with Israel in Jerusalem, and he rightly stresses that,

¹⁰⁵ Helmuth Egelkraut, *Jesus' Mission to Jerusalem: A Redaction Critical Study of the Travel Narrative in the Gospel of Luke, Lk 9:51-19:48*, *Europäische Hochschulschriften* 23 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1976), 148.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 222-3.

whatever its social function might have been, Luke's narrative is firstly a story about Jesus and what transpired in his life. However, in view of the compelling arguments of Jervell and Lohfink regarding the *mixed* reception of Jesus by the people, Egelkraut's assertion that "Israel exhibited nothing but opposition" appears flatly wrong.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Egelkraut's redaction-critical analysis is marked by habitual eisegesis, by which he repeatedly inserts his thesis that Luke's redaction of the travel narrative traditions serves to foreshadow the mutual rejection of God and Israel in the climactic arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem. A single example of this tendency suffices to make the point.

In his discussion of the Lord's prayer in Lk 11:1-4, Egelkraut asserts that the disciples' request, "Teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples," implies a rejection of Jewish identity:

Lk has the disciples request Jesus for a new prayer. By this their past Jewish prayer practice is marked as insufficient. The disciples found in Jesus' own prayer life a certainty and an intimacy unparalleled in what they had seen before. He had also revealed to them the Father in such a manner that their inherited

¹⁰⁷ Egelkraut is however frequently cited as an authority in Sanders, *Jews in Luke-Acts* (e.g., pp. 58, 186, 192, 208).

prayers no longer would suffice as a response. The new revelation requires a new response. Thus 11:1 hearkens back to 10:21ff.¹⁰⁸

While it is true that 10:21-24 presents an epistemic contrast between the disciples and those outside, the terms of that contrast are not drawn as Egelkraut imagines them,¹⁰⁹ nor is any contrast with a specifically *Jewish* alterity signaled in the text of Lk 11:1-4. But Egelkraut is undeterred:

A particular order of prayer is one of the most essential signs of identity among contemporary religious associations. In their request for a prayer the disciples exhibit the self-consciousness of a new and separate religious group. As they received the new revelation from Jesus, so they will receive their new prayer from and through Jesus. It unifies and distinguishes them as Jesus' disciples. They admit what the opponents deny, that in him they have access to God, and that in him there is salvation. The prayer is for the group. It cannot be compared with the kind of private prayers that could be added after the *Shemoneh 'Esreh*. It is of official character.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Egelkraut, *Mission to Jerusalem*, 153-154.

¹⁰⁹ For a discussion of Lk 10:21-24, see the previous chapter.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 154.

Amidst this string of exegetically unargued claims is a note appealing to the existence of particular and distinguishing prayer practices within contemporary Jewish groups, including the Pharisees, the Qumran community, and the disciples of John the Baptist, whom Jesus' disciples reference in 11:1.¹¹¹ But surely the analogy of these examples ought to lead to the conclusion that Jesus was *like* John, the Pharisees, and the Qumran sectarians in leading his followers in concrete discipleship to the God of Israel.¹¹² There is undoubtedly a measure of devotion and particularity in the disciples' confidence in Jesus, and this may have some relation to a nascent self-consciousness in the community of the disciples, but the shape of that self-understanding as it relates to what has preceded Jesus and to the Jewish community "outside" the church has been entirely *inferred*. Egelkraut's interpretation of the passage thus has nothing to do with prayer but is concerned with the confirmation of his thesis that the Jews will be disinherited. He admits, "There is no open hostility or conflict in this pericope. Nonetheless in its whole orientation there is a latent criticism of the old community and a foreboding of the day

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 154, n.3.

¹¹² On the fluidity and innovation of Jewish liturgical prayer in the early centuries of the Common Era, see Joel Marcus, "Passover and the Last Supper Revisited," *NTS* 59 (3) (2013): 303-324; *idem*, "Birkat Ha-Minim Revisited," *NTS* 55 (4) (2009): 523-551.

when a new people of God will take its place.”¹¹³ In this and many instances, Egelkraut’s method involves divining what is *implicit* in the text and applying that discovery as a lens for his analysis. But in reading between the lines, he frequently imports his own thesis. What Egelkraut rightly observes, however—and in this his reading improves upon Reicke’s otherwise superior work—is that one cannot simply speak of the travel narrative as having an ecclesial relevance without reckoning with the functions of the travel narrative in the narrative horizon of the story Luke tells, a story of the encounter between Jesus and Israel—an encounter that brings Jesus face-to-face with *both* opponents *and* disciples.

The fact of Jesus’ critical orientation to both groups is of great significance to the interpretation of the travel narrative. For Egelkraut as for Reicke, conflict with Jesus’ opponents—referred to improperly as “the Jews” by both scholars—provides the historical analogue for the situation in Luke’s day, in which contemporary Jews form a coherent alterity that serves to demarcate the identity of the true people of God, the church. Conzelmann likewise observes that the creation of a travel narrative, in which Jesus’ impending arrival and rejection in Jerusalem is dramatized, is part of Luke’s systematic exposition not only of sacred history but also of the nature and fate of the Jewish people: “The journey, the Passion, the guilt of the Jews and the resulting fate of

¹¹³ Egelkraut, *Mission to Jerusalem*, 155.

the city form a closely linked chain. It is the fault of the Jews that Jerusalem does not fulfil its destiny. They forfeit their election by killing Jesus.”¹¹⁴ These statements more or less accord with the interpretation of Luke’s view given below, with the important exception of the claim about Jewish disinheritance, which appears to be a theological corollary deduced from Conzelmann’s historical scheme. Conzelmann himself fails to consider the parallel critique of the disciples in the travel narrative and the integral relation of that critique to the guilt of the disciples in the climactic final chapters of Luke’s gospel. As a result, he does not perceive the thoroughgoing parallelism that is part of the presentation of the opponents and the disciples or the significance for both groups of Jesus’ eschatologically potent arrival in Jerusalem. The implications of the arrival, as we shall see, involve the impending destruction of the city, which, for Conzelmann, is of little theological significance: “It is an event belonging to secular history.”¹¹⁵ On the contrary, the present chapter argues that the advent of Jesus in Jerusalem, together with the narratives that foreshadow it and the sayings that interpret its significance, are central to Luke’s creation of a potent narrative parallel between

¹¹⁴ Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, 133-134. The statement that “Jerusalem does not fulfil its destiny” is poorly worded, in view of the fact that God, according to Luke, destines even the opposition of God’s enemies (so Lk 22:22, Acts 2:23, 4:28).

¹¹⁵ *Theology of St. Luke*, 134.

Jesus' impending journey to Jerusalem and the crisis of his (delayed) second coming in judgment upon the church, Israel, and the world.

In light of Conzelmann's observation that Luke's narrative has been shaped by the delay of the parousia, a similar delay of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, an entry that appears imminent from the perspective of Lk 9:51, merits close consideration.¹¹⁶ What scholars have termed the "travel narrative" is, I argue below, the result of Luke's bringing forward the events in Jerusalem into Jesus' ministry, creating thereby a parallel between the life of Jesus and that of the church, both of which are schematized by Luke as leading to the crisis of Jesus' advent in Jerusalem.¹¹⁷ Like Jesus, the church is on a

¹¹⁶ John T. Carroll's important monograph, *Response to the End of History: Eschatology and Situation in Luke-Acts*, SBLDS 92 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), has successfully challenged Conzelmann's claim that Luke had given up the early Christian hope of an imminent parousia. Acknowledging that Luke was affected by an awareness of the delay of the end and of the developing life of the church, Carroll argues that Luke nevertheless preserves an imminent expectation that makes use of the motif of delay (*Response to the End of History*, 163-67).

¹¹⁷ Luke's creation of parallels between Jesus in the gospel and the apostles in Acts is well established. See, e.g. Charles H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes, and the Genre of Luke-Acts*, SBLMS 20 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1975); Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, 2 Vols., (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986). We have observed already the shaping of Lk 4:16-30 in relation to Paul's experiences in Diaspora synagogues. See also the parallel between the portrayals of Jesus and Stephen at their deaths (Lk 22:41, 23:34 // Acts 7:60).

journey toward a divinely ordained prophetic encounter that will require cross-bearing (Lk 9:23) in the delivery of a message of salvation and judgment that will result in division among the people to whom it is sent (so Acts 14:4). The dissimilarity in the parallel consists, however, in the historical fact of the church's ongoing life; while the Lukan Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem anticipates his death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, from which he will return to Jerusalem (Acts 1:11; 3:20). Thus, both in the life of Christ which Luke narrated and in the experience of the church in which Luke lived, a portentous arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem was the climax toward which God was understood to be moving history. As we shall see, the Lukan story of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, his "first coming," has been shaped in such a way as to strengthen this parallel and evoke an anticipation of his second coming. In this way the delay of the parousia has imparted to Luke's situation an awareness, not unique to him but nevertheless worked out deliberately in his writings, of the life of the church as a recapitulation of the life of Jesus. The story of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem thus operates on a second level as the story of the church's ongoing journey toward the kingdom of God in anticipation of Jesus' second coming. This much has been observed already by Conzelmann and others.¹¹⁸ But for Conzelmann, the delay of the parousia, as a problem for a Christian view of history, has been judged such a central concern that the end of

¹¹⁸ *Theology of St. Luke*, 231-34; cf. Reicke, "Instruction and Discussion," 216.

history becomes a distant nonreality, an “expected End” that is “‘endlessly’ remote.”¹¹⁹ This loss of teleology results in a lack of integration, in Conzelmann’s construal, between the insignificant, “secular” destruction of Jerusalem and the theologically potent narrative that anticipates it.¹²⁰ Moreover, the potential of Luke’s narrative to signify on the second level of Luke’s situation is limited to the journey itself, and the possibility of a similar reading of the end of the Gospel, which is in fact what organizes the whole, is excluded. That end, as we shall see, is anticipated in Luke’s shaping of the travel narrative not only as the story of Jesus’ encounter with Israel during his life but also as a narrative allegory of the church’s ongoing encounter with Israel in anticipation of the second coming. That anticipation may be glimpsed in Luke’s unique treatment of the story of the unproductive fig tree.

5.1.1 The Fruitless Fig Tree: Lk 13:6-9

In Mark’s gospel, Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem is prefaced by his discovery of a fig tree lacking fruit (Mk 11:12-14, cf. vv.20-24). As Jesus is hungry and the tree is barren, he curses the tree saying, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” (Mk 11:14). The next morning Jesus and the disciples find the tree that Jesus cursed withered

¹¹⁹ *Theology of St. Luke*, 132.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 134.

to its root. The event becomes an opportunity for Jesus to instruct the disciples on the importance of faith, which secures the possibility for such a feat as Jesus has performed (Mk 11:22-24). Although no interpretation is given by Mark (or Matthew) of the meaning of the episode, the scenes in Mark's account stand ominously on either side of Jesus' expulsion of merchants and moneychangers from the temple and the statement that the chief priests and scribes were seeking to put Jesus to death (Mk 11:15-19). Through this arrangement, the events appear to have been associated so as to interpret one another. The result is that the unproductive fig tree has become a symbol for the spiritually barren state of the temple and the faithlessness of its leadership.¹²¹ Mathew retains the story at the same point in the Markan outline but modifies it somewhat, removing Mark's intercalation and causing the tree to wither immediately upon hearing Jesus' curse (Mt 21:18-22). The story is omitted, however, by Luke. This omission calls for an explanation, as the episode would have offered Luke a potent symbol for the moral status of both the temple and the people of Israel.

Luke has, in fact, understood the fig tree in a similar metaphorical sense. Instead of an encounter between Jesus and an actual tree, however, Luke presents Jesus telling a parable about an unproductive fig tree and of a gardener who intercedes on its behalf. When the owner of a vineyard finds that his fig tree has been unproductive for three

¹²¹ So Marcus, *Mark*, 2:788.

years, he proposes to have it cut down (Lk 13:6-7). The gardener, however, pleads for more time to fertilize the tree in hopes that, after another year, it may bear fruit. If not, “you shall cut it down” (ἐκκόψεις αὐτήν, 13:8-9). The parable ends there, and no explicit indication is given about what it means. However, it follows directly after Jesus’ discussion of the death of the Galileans and those crushed by the tower of Siloam (13:1-5). Against the idea that those who died were uniquely sinful, Jesus warns that the current inhabitants of Galilee and Jerusalem are equally sinful and that “unless you all repent, you will all perish in the same way” (13:5). Taken as an introduction to the parable, this saying substantially modifies the meaning of the fig tree, which in Mark symbolizes the judgment Jesus passes on the temple leadership. In Luke, the tree represents the people, who may yet repent and thereby avoid the threatened destruction.

Several features of the Lukan parable suggest that it may have a wider significance than the Markan story of the fig tree, upon which it is likely based.¹²² The

¹²² Haenchen suggests that Luke represents the older tradition and that the Markan story is a narrativized version of the older parable known to Mark from oral tradition (*Der Weg Jesu: Eine Erklärung des Markus-Evangeliums und der kanonischen Parallelen* [Berlin: Töpelmann, 1966], 381-82). Whether Luke and Mark had access to a common tradition or whether Luke is dependent entirely on Mark, Luke decided to omit the Markan story in favor of the parable in a location much different than Mark’s. We may therefore speak of Lukan redaction of Mark with respect to the omission of Mk 11:12-14, 20-2; at Lk 13:6-9 we see an

setting of the parable in Galilee together with the immediate juxtaposition of the parable to the warnings to Galileans and inhabitants of Jerusalem (13:1-5) suggests that the fig tree under probation does not refer specifically to Jerusalem but to Israel *as a whole*. While Jerusalem can function as a synecdoche for the nation (e.g. 2:38), a reference to the city is not explicit here. Rather, the warnings immediately prior to this episode are addressed to people of a broad geography – Galileans, among whom Jesus is evidently still present, as well as the inhabitants of Jerusalem (so, ὑμῖν ... πάντες, Lk 13:3, 5). The call to repentance and discipleship under threat of looming judgment thus is addressed to all Israel.

In addition to a wider populace, the saying may encompass a wider historical framework. The destruction of the Jerusalem temple is intimated in the Markan cursing of the fig tree (cf. Mk 13:1-2), and for Luke, who is aware of the destruction as a historical fact, that judgment is certainly anticipated in the parable.¹²³ Nevertheless, Luke knows that Jewish life was not eradicated by the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E, and Jesus' threat of judgment, "unless you repent, you all also will perish" (13:3,5), may have a wider reference than the destruction.

associated composition whose source is unknown but whose relation to the scene omitted from Mark must be taken into account in discerning Luke's authorial purposes.

¹²³ The desire to protect the city from destruction at 13:8 is likewise present in 13:34 and 19:42-44.

An analogy with a Lukan address to gentiles may help to set the possible eschatological horizon for the present parable. The Lukan Paul proclaims in Athens that “God has fixed a day in which to judge the world in righteousness” (Acts 17:31). That judgment has been warranted through the sin of idolatry but has been delayed, “overlooked” on account of the people’s ignorance; now, the delay over, God “commands all people everywhere to repent” (17:29-30). If, as seems to be the case from this scene, the horizon to which Luke looks is world history as a whole, which will be brought to an end by the second coming of Jesus in judgment (cf. Acts 3:21), then the parable of fig tree of Lk 13:6-9 may carry a significance that extends beyond the story of Jerusalem’s failure and consequent destruction. The former fruitlessness of the tree of Israel that has endured the destruction has been overlooked, thanks to the gardener’s intercession, in the hope that it will now repent and bear fruit. The missionary appeal of Peter in the early speeches of Acts includes this same structure of critique and appeal for conversion in the face of looming judgment (Acts 2:38, 3:19), and the result of that appeal is, Luke stresses, a substantial success (Acts 2:41, 4:4; cf. 21:20).

If Lk 13:6-9 carries a kerygmatic significance for contemporary non-Christian Jews,¹²⁴ the choice to set the parable in the travel narrative rather than in Jesus’ final days

¹²⁴ For Fitzmyer the parable has allegorical significance for “the Christian individual” who should consider the brevity of life in view of judgment after death (*Luke*, 2:1005-6). However, since parenthesis is part

in Jerusalem comports with the thesis that in the travel narrative Luke has conflated the first and second comings of Jesus. The delayed arrival in Jerusalem provides an appropriate setting for a prophetic call to repentance to those who exist in a similar historical moment of delay, expecting the imminent but postponed arrival of the Son of Man from heaven. This delay is the distinctive difference between Luke's parable and Mark's narrative. In Luke, the story of the tree does not end, as in Mark and Matthew, with the withering of the tree but with the possibility of the cultivation of future fruit—perhaps “fruits worthy of repentance,” in view of the call to repentance in preceding warnings (13:3, 5; cf. the explicit imagery in 3:8). The parable is not a promise of such fruit; rather “if it bears fruit next year, well and good. But if not, you shall cut it down” (13:9). The parable is thus well-suited to a sermon in which those who have previously been unfruitful are called to respond positively to the gardener's cultivation. Such a sermon and context would bear a remarkable similarity to three other Lukan compositions—the speeches of Peter in Acts 2 and 3 and the speech of Paul in Acts 17. Like those speeches, the parable does not come to a narrative resolution with the destruction or fruitfulness of the tree but simply ends with a prophetic call to repentance under the threat of judgment. In this way, it is like the whole of Luke's account of the

of Jesus' address to both insiders and outsiders, there is no need to limit the parable's application to Christians or, for that matter, to the level of the individual.

mission to the Jews in Acts, which simply ends with the division of the Romans Jews over Paul's words and a threat of judgment. The ending of the parable is thus suited to the narrative of which it is microcosm, for neither resolves before the appointed time.¹²⁵

5.1.2 Herod's Threat and Jesus' Lament over Jerusalem: Luke 13:31-35

Another anticipation of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem also occurs in Galilee.

Warned by Pharisees that Herod wants to kill him, Jesus brushes aside the prospect of a death in Galilee because "it is impossible for a prophet to perish outside Jerusalem" (13:33). He then laments,

Jerusalem, Jerusalem! The city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to it! How often have I desired to gather together your children as a hen gathers her own young under her wings! But you were not willing. Behold, your house is left to you!¹²⁶ And I say to you that you will certainly not see me until the time

¹²⁵ The view that the parable of the fig tree contains hope for Israel's national restoration finds some confirmation in its reception in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, in which the parable prefigures the future repentance of Israel. See Joel Marcus, "The Gospel of Peter as a Jewish Christian Document," *NTS* (forthcoming vol. 64, 2018).

¹²⁶ A number of manuscripts insert the word "desolate" (ἔρημος, following Mt 22:38 (cf. Jer 22:5). I follow the text of NA28, which rejects the interpolation.

shall come when you say, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”

(Lk 13:34-35)

Here Jesus speaks in the voice of God or of God’s representative, for the gathering of Jerusalem is an act of divine deliverance (cf. Deut 32:10-12; Ps 61:4, 91:4; Ruth 2:12).

Although the rejection of this deliverance attributes a dire moral status to the rebellious city, the saying is a lament, for it expresses Jesus’ longing to gather of the city under Jesus’ maternal wings.¹²⁷ Contrary to Egelkraut’s claim that this “decisive logion,” which is central to the travel narrative, functions “to show how Jesus calls Israel to repentance and how Israel rejects him only to be rejected in turn,” Jesus’ desire for Jerusalem is not ultimately frustrated by the city’s resistance.¹²⁸ Rather, it is delayed: “I tell you, you will certainly not see me *until* (ὁὐ μὴ ἴδητέ με ἕως) ...” (13:35). The interpretation of the statement that Jerusalem will not see Jesus until the city heralds

¹²⁷ See Bruce N. Fisk, “See My Tears: A Lament for Jerusalem (Luke 13:31-35; 19:41-44),” in *The Word Leaps the Gap: Essays on Scripture and Theology in Honor of Richard B. Hays*, eds. J. Ross Wagner, C. Kevin Rowe, and A. Katherine Grieb (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 147-188.

¹²⁸ Egelkraut, *Mission to Jerusalem*, 178. Egelkraut recognizes that 13:35b poses a problem for his thesis, particularly because of its connection to the similar temporal indication in 21:24. But the latter text may be interpreted according to his reading, and the former “remains enigmatic” enough to be dismissed: “If Lk nonetheless considered a final restoration and redemption of Israel κατά σάρακα possible, he did not elaborate on it sufficiently to make it a full facet of his thinking” (*Mission to Jerusalem*, 179).

him with blessing must reckon with the function of this saying in its context in Luke, which is strikingly different from the context of the same saying in Matthew.

In Matthew's gospel this lament occurs at the closure of Jesus' teaching in the Jerusalem temple (Mt 23:37-39) immediately prior to Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, his future coming, and "the end of the age" (24:3). The saying is well suited to the context of the Matthean apocalyptic discourse, for it contains elements familiar from the apocalyptic genre: conflict between divine and human actors, conflicting personifications of the city Jerusalem as a mother with endangered children and a murderer of the prophets, the vision in the present tense of Jerusalem's desolate temple, and the expected advent of one coming in the name of the Lord. In Matthew the saying forebodes the destruction of Jerusalem and the second coming of Jesus, events that are expounded in the discourse that follows.¹²⁹ In all likelihood the saying did not originate with Matthew, but whatever the prehistory and prior context of the saying before its inclusion in the gospels of Matthew and Luke, it almost certainly functioned originally as it does in Matthew's gospel. In Matthew, the statement that Jerusalem "stone[s] those sent to her (τοὺς ἀπεσταλμένους πρὸς αὐτήν)" would have carried a specific meaning for a church that remembered the rejection of the apostles by the Jerusalem authorities (cf. the juxtaposition of "prophets and apostles" at Lk 11:49). The

¹²⁹ So Luz, *Matthew*, 3:160-65.

present tense statement that the “house” of Jerusalem — that is, the temple — has been “abandoned” (ἀφίεται) suggests a standpoint from which the devastation under Titus is regarded as an accomplished fact.¹³⁰ Moreover, the statement “you shall not see me until...” is naturally intelligible in the context of Jesus’ ascension and delayed return (cf. 17:22, “The days are coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not [οὐκ ὄψεσθε]”). The lament over Jerusalem thus appears in Matthew as a prophecy uttered by Jesus about Israel’s vision of Jesus at his second coming (cf. Rev 1:7). Whatever may have been the actual source for Lk 13:34-35, the saying was likely fixed in the tradition prior to Luke in a context like the one found in Matthew.

It is remarkable that Luke does not place this saying in the apocalyptic farewell discourse of Jesus but in the middle of the travel narrative before Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem. By inserting a saying about the destruction of Jerusalem (13:35a) and Jesus’

¹³⁰ F.D. Weinert has argued that Jerusalem’s “house” refers not to the temple but to the city’s leadership (“Luke, the Temple, and Jesus’ Sayings about Jerusalem’s Abandoned House (Luke 13:34-35),” *CBQ* 44 (1982): 68-76. Fitzmyer agrees, noting the wider sense of “house” language in contemporary Jewish sources (*Luke*, 2:1036-7). But, in view of the common description of the temple as a “house” in biblical and later Jewish sources and Luke’s evident awareness of the destruction of the temple — an event that has a prominent place in the Lukan Jesus’ teaching (e.g. 19:44, 21:6) — such a saying cannot help but evoke the image of the ruined temple. As Fisk observes, the temple and its leadership are implied by one another (“*See My Tears*,” 164).

second coming (13:35b) into the context of Jesus' teaching ministry, Jesus' prediction now anticipates his protracted entrance into the city, his first coming. The relocation of the saying to 13:35b creates an awkward relation to 19:38, where the words "blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord" are in fact uttered with respect to Jesus, for it now appears that 13:35b could be a flat, uninteresting prediction the events at 19:38, in which Jesus effectively states, with meaningless gravitas, "You will not see me, O Jerusalem, until the time comes when I shall arrive" immediately after stating his intention to go there (13:33). This meaning is unlikely, for the words of acclamation at 19:38 come not from "Jerusalem" but from the disciples accompanying Jesus from Galilee and are opposed by the Pharisees. Moreover, if the confession in 19:38 fulfilled what was missing from 13:35, the fact of confession would seem, on the logic of 13:35, to obviate the coming judgment due to the failure to recognize Jesus. But this is hardly Luke's purpose.

Luke's recontextualization of the lament does not create a new meaning for Jesus' words that displaces their original significance. Rather, the second coming of Jesus has been conflated with his first coming, so that the two events are presented as individual instances of a single apocalyptic encounter. In 13:35, the Lukan Jesus appears to look beyond his impending arrival and rejection in the city to a more distant future, for in the single Lukan modification of the words of the saying, he proclaims that Jerusalem will not see him "until *the time will come* when you say..." (ἕως ἡξει ὅτε

εἴπητε..., 13:35; contrast Mt 23:39: ἕως ἄν εἴπητε). That time is the second coming, when, Jesus predicts, he will be greeted by Israel with the words of Ps 118:26.¹³¹ The fact that this greeting arises from the disciples upon Jesus' entry into Jerusalem at 19:38 does not negate the eschatological sense of 13:35; rather it creates a literary parallel between that eschatological future coming and Jesus' imminent first arrival in Jerusalem, which is therefore already, in some sense, eschatological.

In the context of the travel narrative, the function of this parallel is not to explain the parousia but to dramatize Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem in terms drawn from the Lukan idea of the parousia. Just as Jesus' future coming in glory is certain but delayed, so Jesus' first arrival in the city in anticipation of his passion is both imminent and protracted. Just as the eschatological event will bring about a cosmic encounter between Christ and the world (Acts 17:31; cf. 3:21), so the proleptic enactment of this event in Jesus' earthly life, his portentous arrival in Jerusalem, brings about a plenary encounter between Jesus and all Israel that is invested with the significance of the apocalyptic

¹³¹ This is the meaning of the saying of Jesus at Mt 23:39, which either serves as Luke's source or else preserves the sense of the lament in Q. On the meaning of Q 13:35, see Paul Hoffman, "QR und der Menschensohn: Eine vorläufige Skizze," *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck*, eds. F. Van Segbroeck et al., 3 vols. (Leuven: University Press and Peeters, 1992), 421-56; cited in James M. Robinson, "History of Q Research," in *The Critical Edition of Q*, Hermeneia, eds. James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), lvii-lviii.

event it heralds. As we shall see, it is this feature of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem that accounts for Luke's totalizing claim upon all Israel for its complicity in Jesus' death. That death is invested with theological significance as the "time of Jerusalem's visitation" (19:44).

If it is true that the second coming of Jesus shades with eschatological significance Luke's narration of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, his "first coming,"¹³² this theological artistry may help to explain a strange saying of Jesus in response to the Pharisees' warning about a threat from Herod. The desire of the Lukan Pharisees to protect Jesus¹³³ is met by a defiant Jesus with a double message to Herod about Jesus' ministry and fate in Jerusalem:

Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I am finished (ἐκβάλλω δαιμόνια καὶ ἰάσεις ἀποτελῶ σήμερον καὶ

¹³² This is not, of course, Jesus' first time in Jerusalem in Luke. But it is the first time that Luke portrays the adult Jesus arriving in the city since the beginning of his ministry.

¹³³ Egelkraut reads the warning from the Pharisees as seeking to hasten Jesus' death in Jerusalem, but this reading is unpersuasive, as the Pharisees are not part of the conspiracy that leads to his death in Luke. So Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1030.

αὔριον καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ τελειοῦμαι).¹³⁴ But it is necessary for me to proceed today, tomorrow, and the subsequent day (σήμερον καὶ αὔριον καὶ τῇ ἔχομένῃ), for it is impossible for a prophet to perish outside of Jerusalem. (13:32-33)

The repetition of the sequence of three days is deliberate, suggesting that Luke is redacting an original saying of Jesus to make a theological point. Fitzmyer understands the first two days in each sequence to refer to Jesus' ministry, while the third day indicates the completion of Jesus' divinely appointed work, consisting of his death, resurrection, and ascension.¹³⁵ While a reference to Jesus' death is clear in light of the statement about the prophet's death in Jerusalem, it is doubtful that the meaning of the "third day" is exhausted by Jesus' ascension, for Jesus continues to speak and work in the life of the church (Acts 9:5, 11, 16:7, 18:9, 22:18, 23:11; cf. 1:1, ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν). The verb τελειοῦμαι is evocative even on Fitzmyer's reading, incorporating both the ministry of Jesus and his climactic death. But if this statement about the fulfillment that Jesus will accomplish is read within Luke's entire narrative, it signifies not only the climactic events of his earthly life but also the life of the early church, with

¹³⁴ The passive form τελειοῦμαι means both "I finish my work" and "I am finished," in the sense of "I meet my end," (so Bovon, *Luke* 2, 326).

¹³⁵ Fitzmyer, *Luke* 2:1028-32.

which Jesus' life is coordinate. Understood in this sense, "the third day" on which Jesus' life is being completed extends into Luke's own day.

The likelihood that the third day refers forward to an unfinished future is strengthened by a closer consideration of the syntax of 13:32:

εἶπατε τῇ ἀλώπεκι ταύτῃ·

ἰδοὺ ἐκβάλλω δαιμόνια καὶ ἰάσεις ἀποτελῶ

σήμερον καὶ αὔριον

καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ τελειοῦμαι.

The NRSV interprets the verbs of exorcism and healing as occurring on the first two days, while the third day is the day of completion: "I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work." Yet the relation of σήμερον καὶ αὔριον to the two clauses that enclose it is unclear. If these two days are linked in a single conception with the third, the three-day sequence may operate entirely with respect to the clause governed by τελειοῦμαι, so that another reading is plausible: "Behold, I cast out demons and work cures! Today, and tomorrow, and the third day I bring to completion!" The completion may thus refer to the full temporal sequence and consist of three sorts of actions: those done presently (σήμερον, probably evoking the present tense verbs ἐκβάλλω and ἀποτελῶ), those immediately

forthcoming (αὔριον), and those yet further away (τῆ τρίτῃ). This reading is preferable to that of the NRSV, in which the third day alone is the day of completion, and the works of exorcism and healing are preparatory. Luke elsewhere regards these works not as preparatory but as indicating the kingdom's presence (11:20; cf. 7:19-23). This reading of Lk 13:32 is a reasonable interpretation of the NA28 text represented above.¹³⁶ On this reading, the Lukan Jesus correlates his present work to two futures, a near and a more distant one (αὔριον καὶ τῆ τρίτῃ).

This syntactical arrangement is confirmed by the structure of the clause that immediately follows. Verse 33 begins, πλὴν δεῖ με σήμερον καὶ αὔριον καὶ τῆ ἐχομένη πορεύεσθαι. Here the verb follows the sequence of three days that it refers to. The fact that Jesus' movement toward Jerusalem has a present moment (σήμερον) and an extended future (αὔριον καὶ τῆ ἐχομένη) invites the question of whether this tri-partite scheme indicates distinct phases in the story of Jesus. Bovon suggests that "tomorrow" refers to Jesus' final days in Jerusalem, whereas "the next day" refers to the ascension.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ One third century manuscript, P⁴⁵, requires the sense here proposed, since it inserts a conjunction following the statement of healing, thus assigning all temporal markers to the final verb: ἰδοὺ ἐκβάλλω δαμόνια καὶ ἰάσεις ποιῶμαι, καὶ σήμερον καὶ αὔριον καὶ τῆ τρίτῃ τελειοῦμαι. This is probably not the original reading, but its existence indicates that at an early scribe understood the more ambiguous syntax of the verse in the manner I am proposing.

¹³⁷ Bovon, *Luke 2*, 327.

This division is reasonable in view of the importance of the ascension in Luke's thought.¹³⁸ But while the significance of the ascension in Lukan thought has been well recognized, scholars have tended to terminate its significance with the moment of Jesus' departure from earth, as though that moment comprised the end and culmination of Jesus' life and work.¹³⁹ However, because the ascension does not terminate but rather modulates the ministry of Jesus, we are justified in asking whether it marks the end of the "coming day."

If there is no need to fit the scheme of three days into the earthly life of Jesus, another interpretation presents itself. Since, somewhat surprisingly, Luke views Jesus as ready for his ascension as early as 9:51, such that his earthly life is already drawing to a close, we may understand "today" in 13:32-33 to refer to the whole of that life as basically completed. "Tomorrow" thus refers to what occurs next, the resurrection, ascension, and Jesus' ongoing work in the church in anticipation of his return, while "the next day" may refer to the eschatological return of the risen Christ after the period

¹³⁸ See Lohfink, *Die Himmelfahrt Jesu: Untersuchungen zu den Himmelfahrts- und Erhöhungstexten bei Lukas*, SZANT 26 (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1971), 214; cf. Adolf Schlatter, *Das Evangelium Des Lukas*, 2nd Ed., (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1960), 270; cf. Bovon, *Luke 2*, 6.

¹³⁹ David Moffitt argues persuasively that in Acts the ascension is not a punctiliar moment but a durative period whose significance may be best understood in terms of Jewish theologies of atonement. See David Moffitt, "Atonement at the Right Hand: The Sacrificial Significance of Jesus' Exaltation in Acts," *NTS* 62 (2016): 549-568.

of his stay in heaven (so Acts 3:21). This reading receives support from a textual variant at v.33. While many manuscripts have the reading “But I must proceed today, tomorrow, and the next day (καὶ τῆ ἐρχομένῃ),” a number of important and early manuscripts read “today, tomorrow, and the *coming day* (τῆ ἐρχομένῃ).”¹⁴⁰ Strictly speaking, this variation, which results from the insertion of a *rho*, does not require a different interpretation than τῆ ἐρχομένῃ; it could simply mean “the next day.” However, the biblical language of “the coming day” is suggestive of eschatological judgment (cf. Jer 29:4 LXX, Mal 3:19 LXX), and its presence imparts to Jesus’ saying in these manuscripts a heightened eschatological sense. It is likely that the eschatologically heavy term ἐρχομένῃ is a scribal corruption of ἐχομένῃ, which is less theologically profound, but the corruption reveals how easy it was for a scribe to associate Jesus’ words, which clearly refer, in part, to his earthly life (σήμερον, 13:32, 33) with the course of salvation history that extends beyond his ascension.

5.1.3 The Timing of the Kingdom’s Arrival: Lk 17:20-37

Shortly after another editorial reminder of his coming arrival in Jerusalem (17:11), the Lukan Jesus faces a question about the timing of the coming of the kingdom. This question, a key concern of Luke, receives a double answer, first to the Pharisees

¹⁴⁰ So P⁴⁵, 1241, κ , and D (Greek and Latin).

who pose the question (vv.20-21) and then, in a more extended form, to the disciples (vv.22-37). The first answer is largely negative—“The kingdom does not come with observation” (μετὰ παρατηρήσεως, 17:20b). This saying is, as Fitzmyer observes, a caution against attempting to perceive the kingdom’s coming as a cosmological event attested by signs, such as would prompt an observer to say “‘Look here!’ or ‘There!’” (ἰδοὺ ὧδε ἢ ἐκεῖ, v.21).¹⁴¹ The saying may also be an oblique rebuke to the Pharisees’ critical scrutiny of Jesus (cf. the use of παρατηρέω at Lk 6:7, 14:1, 20:20): they will learn little about the kingdom by seeking to catch Jesus or his disciples through hostile dispute. Jesus’ positive response to their question seeks to reorient them to perceive the kingdom that is, in some way, already in their midst. The form of this cryptic saying may shed some light not only on Luke’s picture of Jesus but also on Luke’s situation with regard to the Pharisees.

The meaning of Jesus’ declaration, unique to Luke, “Behold, the kingdom of God is among you” (ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστίν, 17:21), has been much discussed. Fitzmyer outlines three main interpretive possibilities for the phrase ἐντὸς ὑμῶν: 1) It may have an internal, personal sense (“in your hearts”); 2) it may mean “among you” as a present historical reality embodied in Christ and the later church; 3) it may mean that the kingdom is “within your grasp” as a possibility to be obtained.

¹⁴¹ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1160.

Fitzmyer rejects the first option as unsuitable to Luke's general conception of the kingdom and "inappropriate, when the answer of Jesus is addressed to Pharisees."¹⁴²

The second option of a realized eschatological vision draws some support from Luke's ecclesiological concerns but stands in tension with the futurity of the kingdom elsewhere in Luke's writing (e.g. Acts 14:22).¹⁴³ Laboring over the question of why the phrase ἐν τὸς ὑμῶν is used instead of the more suitable phrase ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν (cf. 22:27, Acts 2:22), Fitzmyer expresses a tentative preference for the third option, advocated by H.J. Cadbury.¹⁴⁴ As Fitzmyer observes, the saying at 17:21 must fit within Luke's view of history, in which the kingdom of God is an anticipated future reality whose presence is

¹⁴² Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1161.

¹⁴³ For Conzelmann, "it is not the Kingdom that is present, but the preliminary signs of it," both in the life of Jesus and in the Spirit-filled life of the church, which awaits the kingdom's future coming: "It is the message of the Kingdom that is present, which Luke is distinguishing from the Kingdom itself" (*Theology of St. Luke*, 122). Fitzmyer dismisses this position as born of a tendentious *Kontroversstheologie* that denies the Catholic ecclesial claim to embody the kingdom (*Luke*, 1161). But Conzelmann's judgment is an attempt to hold together Jesus' statement of the kingdom's imminence at 17:21 with other statements emphasizing it as a reality which the church still anticipates. For a critical adjustment of Conzelmann's view, which argues for an imminent eschatological hope within the more developed historical vision that Conzelmann perceived, see Carroll, *Response to the End of History*.

¹⁴⁴ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1162; cf. H.J. Cadbury, "The Kingdom of God and Ourselves," *Christian Century* 67 (1950): 172-173. The reading "within your grasp" draws some support from recently discovered Greek papyri; see Bovon, *Luke 2*, 516.

already partially manifested among those who embody it (11:20) and are thereby said to be *entering* it (16:16, 18:17; Acts 14:22).¹⁴⁵ As Jesus, the heir of the Father's kingdom (Lk 22:29), shares this status only with those who "hear the word of God and do it" (8:21), an interpretation of the kingdom's presence in 17:21 that allows for the possibility of its realization contingent upon one's actions would cohere with Luke's broad ethical and eschatological vision.

But what are we to make of the fact that the statement is made to Pharisees? Given the hostility between Jesus and the Pharisees in the gospel tradition, it would not have been surprising if Jesus had said that the kingdom of God would not come *at all* for the Pharisees, that it had been taken away from them and given to others (cf. Mt 21:43). Many scholars, therefore, do not interpret the statement as a reply particularly directed to Pharisees, and the relevance of the narrative context is limited to the function of the Pharisees' question as a foil to Jesus' announcement of the kingdom's presence.¹⁴⁶ Green

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Carroll, *Response to the End of History*, 166.

¹⁴⁶ Maddox, following Schnackenburg's reconstruction, assigns the narrative of a dialogue with Pharisees (17:20a) to Luke's creative hand but does not interpret the "you" of 17:21b in relation to Pharisees (*Purpose*, 134-36); cf. Rudolf Schnackenburg, "Der Eschatologische Abschnitt Lk 17:20-37," in A. Deschamps and A. de Halleux, eds., *Mélanges bibliques en hommage au R.P. Béda Rigaux* (Bembloux: Duculot, 1970), 213-234. Evans's consideration of the grammar of 17:21 fails to consider any relation to the Pharisees to whom the response is directed (*Saint Luke*, 625-30). Bovon interprets the saying in light of God's presence in the midst of Israel in the Hebrew Bible and Rom 10:5-13 (*Luke 2*, 516-17). David B. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy and*

correctly observes, “This is the first of several places in Luke-Acts where a request for clarity regarding the kingdom leads to the correction of misunderstanding about the eschatological timetable,” but he does not consider that elsewhere those conversations are between Jesus’ and disciples (Lk 19:11, 21:7; esp. Acts 1:6).¹⁴⁷ As Chapter 3 has argued, Luke’s orientation to the Pharisees is not simply hostile but is by turns critical and conciliatory.¹⁴⁸ The Lukan Jesus’ extended instruction of Pharisees, not all of which is denunciatory (cf. 7:36-50; 14:3, 7-24), suggests that his answer to the Pharisees’ question may continue this pattern of engagement.

With regard to that answer, Fitzmyer resists “within you” as a translation for ἐντὸς ὑμῶν because he thinks it suggests “an inward reality or an inner condition of human existence” that is foreign to Luke’s conception of the kingdom. But the interiority that is indicated by the preposition ἐντὸς need not be understood in an

Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), 264-66, reads the Pharisees’ narrative function as one of contrast to the disciples. For Green, the “wrongheaded assumption of the Pharisees’ question” [but see Acts 1:6!] shows that they “do not recognize and (and cannot respond to) God’s new world order” (*Luke*, 630).

¹⁴⁷ Green, *Luke*, 628.

¹⁴⁸ See the measured assessment of Brawley, *Luke-Acts and the Jews*, 84-106.

individual psychological or existential sense.¹⁴⁹ Rather, reading the plural ὑμῶν in reference to the Pharisees Jesus is addressing, it is possible that the phrase refers to the presence of the kingdom, in some sense, within the Pharisees as a group. In light of the critical relationship Jesus sustains to the Pharisees, particularly in the gospel, it is understandable that most scholars do not regard Lk 17:21b as a statement that affirms anything positive about the Pharisees and their relationship to the kingdom.¹⁵⁰ However, when we compare this passage with the portrayal of Pharisaic teaching in Acts, the meaning of Jesus' statement to the Pharisees becomes clearer.

In his trial before the Jewish council, Paul receives a surprising defense from "scribes of the Pharisaic party" when he announces his own identity as "a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees...on trial concerning the hope of the resurrection of the dead" (Acts 23:6-10). Luke makes clear that Paul's statement is a calculated political maneuver, for we are told that it comes "when Paul realized that one part of the council was composed

¹⁴⁹ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1161.

¹⁵⁰ This tendency might have been mitigated if we had recognized the similarity between Jesus' word to the Pharisees at Lk 17:21b ("The kingdom of God is among you") and the Markan Jesus' approval of the scribe's Torah interpretation: "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk 12:34). For Luke's rewriting of Mk 12:28-34, including the omission of this saying, see Lk 10:25-28 and the previous chapter.

of Sadducees and the other of Pharisees" (23:6).¹⁵¹ When the Pharisees perceive that the trial has become a theological dispute between themselves and the Sadducees, they rush to Paul's defense, staunchly proclaiming, "We find nothing wrong in this man! What if a spirit or angel has spoken to him?" (23:9). In fact, Paul has had many dealings with the spiritual realm (Acts 13:9, 16:18, 19:6, 15, 21:4; cf. 9:10-12, 16:9, 18:9, 27:3), and that very night is visited by Jesus in a vision (23:11). Luke's story thus draws attention to the congruence of Paul's spiritual experiences and Pharisaic teaching regarding the spiritual realm. The narrative aside in Acts 23:8, which contrasts the Pharisees' belief in resurrection, angels, and spirits with the denial of these by Sadducees, explains the logic of Paul's action in calling the Pharisees to his defense, but the comment also draws attention to three points of theological agreement between Lukan Christianity and Luke's understanding of Pharisaism. Likewise, though Paul's statement in 23:6 is a

¹⁵¹ Rowe observes Paul's "cunning in discerning the move that would divide his opponents" — a move that is political rather than theological (C. Kavin Rowe, *World Upside Down: Reading Acts in the Graeco-Roman Age* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010], 70). For Rowe, partial theological agreement, such as Paul here seems to articulate with the Pharisaic belief in the resurrection, is not really agreement at all, for "resurrection" means something much different for these Pharisees than it does for Luke (cf. Rowe, *One True Life*, 175-258). On the question of what kind of commensurability obtains between Luke's theological vision and that of his Jewish contemporaries, see the conclusion to this work. Here we may observe simply that Luke presents readers with the paradox that the Pharisees of the council before whom Paul stands trial hold to a belief that Paul refers to as shared.

shrewd political calculation, it also articulates a point of contact with non-Christian Pharisees who, through Paul's rhetoric, become his defenders. The emphasis upon the continuity of Pharisaic teaching with Paul's gospel is made again in Paul's speech before Felix, in which he stresses his consistent maintenance of "a hope in God, which they themselves also cherish, that there will be a resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous" (Acts 24:15). Luke thus indicates a point of contact between Christianity and the Pharisaic belief in resurrection (a point of contact that does not exist with the pagans in Athens, cf. Acts 17:32) and in the possibility that one might, like Paul, receive instruction via a visitation from the realm of the spirits.¹⁵²

In view of this relation between two aspects of Pharisaic doctrine and early Christian belief, Jesus' saying in Lk 17:21 may mean that the kingdom of God is already present among the Pharisees in their belief in resurrection. It is thus "within their grasp," if they may only perceive it. However, as the kingdom is for Luke a reality whose presence and future are known only in the community of Jesus (cf. 10:21-22), the claim that the Pharisees are on its threshold remains a call to conversion.

¹⁵² Luke's affirmation of these Pharisaic teachings is distantly similar to the statement of Jesus in Mt 23:2-3 that the Pharisees are to be obeyed with regard to their teaching but not their practice, which is inconsistent with their profession. For Luke, the Pharisees are inconsistent with their own teachings regarding the resurrection and the spiritual realm, since they acknowledge such things in principle but do not accept Jesus' resurrection when it is proclaimed by his inspired messengers.

Following this short dialogue with Pharisees, in which the question of eschatology is sidestepped in order to issue a cryptic, kerygmatic appeal to enter the kingdom *now* (ἰδοὺ ... ἔστιν, 17:21), Jesus turns to his disciples for a more direct engagement with the subject of eschatology. We will have occasion in the discussion of Lk 21 below to consider Luke's shaping of Jesus' apocalyptic teaching to his disciples. Here we may observe two significant features of Lk 17:22-37.

The first is that Luke appears to have brought forward material from the apocalyptic discourse in Jerusalem into a discussion about the "days of the Son of Man" in the travel narrative (17:22). Assessing the precise source of the materials that comprise this discourse is difficult. There are similar sayings present in Mark and Matthew: the prediction that some will call others to "Look here! or Look there!" for the Son of Man (Lk 17:23; cf. Mk 13:21; Mt 24:23) and the warning not to descend from the housetop into the house or return from the field in order to claim one's possessions (Lk 17:31; cf. Mk 13:15-16; Mt 24:17-18). Luke also contains material drawn from either Q or Matthew: the likening of the appearance of the Son of Man to lightning (Lk 17:24; cf. Mt 24:27) and the Son of Man's coming to the days of Noah (Lk 17:26-27; cf. Mt 24:37-38), the sudden "taking" of women and men from one another (Lk 17:34-36; Mt 24:40-41), and the saying "wherever the corpse is, there the eagles will gather" (Lk 17:37; Mt 24:28). In both types of material (Double and Triple Tradition), the traditions in the other Synoptics are located in the context of Jesus' Jerusalem discourses regarding the coming

of the Son of Man and the destruction of the temple. Lk 17:22-37 is thus another place in which Luke has brought forward into the travel narrative material from an apocalyptic discourse about the coming of the Son of Man. This conflation of the comings of Jesus may explain the otherwise enigmatic reference, present only here in the canonical gospels, to the “*days of the Son of Man*” (17:22, 26).¹⁵³ The plural use of ἡμέραι, and particularly the longer phrase “one of the days of the Son of Man” (17:22) does not have a clear explanation.¹⁵⁴ However, when we consider that, for Luke, the Son of Man has not one “day” of encounter with Israel but two—his arrival in Jerusalem in his earthly life and his eschatological coming at the parousia—the plural use of “days” appears appropriate. The prediction that the disciples will, in the future, long for “one of the days of the Son of Man” acknowledges the fact that, after Jesus’ first arrival to Jerusalem and his departure from there, his second coming will be eagerly anticipated. The statement thus means: *the days of the church are coming when, experiencing Jesus’ bodily absence, you will be filled with nostalgia for the day when Jesus, the Son of Man, walked among*

¹⁵³ A saying in *Gos. Thom.* 38 (“There will be *days* when you will seek me, and you will not find me”) is similar to Lk 17:22 (“*Days* are coming when you will long to see one of the *days* of the Son of Man, and you will not see”). On Thomas’ dependence on Luke, see Mark Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels: The Case for Thomas’s Familiarity with the Synoptics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).

¹⁵⁴ Fitzmyer suggests the possibility that the plural arose as a parallel to the “days of Noah” (*Luke*, 2:1168), but the longer phrase at 17:22 remains difficult.

you. But his presence on that day was meant to anticipate the day of his coming again, a day toward which you are on pilgrimage.

The second observation about this section builds upon the first. The material from the Jerusalem apocalyptic discourse that has been relocated into the travel narrative is employed not to foreshadow the destruction of Jerusalem but to prepare the disciples for vigilance. Even material that appears to have originally referred to the destruction of the Jerusalem (e.g. Mk 13:14-15) now refers to an apocalyptic event that will occur after notable delay (“days are coming when you will long to see...but will not,” 17:22) and will comprehend the whole world, “from one end of heaven to the other” (17:24). As Fitzmyer explains:

This somber eschatological instruction about the day(s) of the son of Man has undoubtedly been added by Luke because of his realization of a delay in its revelation. He has made it part of Jesus’ training of his disciples as he is *en route* to Jerusalem so that the disciples who follow him along that way will realize the implications of it all in their own lives.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1168.

This realization of the present implications of the apocalyptic future does not remove the eschatological horizon from Luke's viewpoint altogether. Rather, the relocation of this apocalyptic eschatological instruction to the travel narrative—that is, to the middle of the pilgrimage of Jesus—underscores the life of discipleship as an anticipation of future judgment and deliverance. Likewise, the presence of such apocalyptic warnings about the coming of the Son of Man in the context of Jesus' imminent arrival in Jerusalem prepares the reader to reflect on that looming event as a harbinger of the eschaton.

5.1.4 The Parable of the Nobleman's Journey: Lk 19:11-27

The conflation of the comings of Jesus is also evident in the choice of the moment of arrival at the outskirts of Jerusalem, immediately prior to the so-called "triumphal entry," as the setting for the parable of the nobleman's journey. In view of the dramatic way in which Jesus has set his face toward entry into Jerusalem, the city where his "exodus" will take place (9:31, 51) and whose children he longs to gather together (13:33-34), it is understandable that those who accompany him "supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately" upon his arrival (19:11). Luke has drawn attention to Jesus' eschatological visitation to Israel (7:16; cf. 19:44) and repeatedly heralded his entry into Jerusalem to create precisely this impression. Yet the misperception of those accompanying him—we must think firstly of the apostles (cf. Acts 1:6)—provides the occasion for Jesus' correction: "A nobleman went to a distant country (εἰς χῶρον

μακρὰν) to receive royal power for himself, and *return*" (19:12). The arrival in Jerusalem is thus not the end of the road, despite the attention the Lukan Jesus has given to it. Rather, the lengthy narrative of Jesus' arrival initiates the beginning of another journey, which has a built-in return route (so Acts 1:11). The closure of the first journey provides an occasion for Jesus to reflect on the nature of the second journey from and back to Jerusalem, during which the status of the nobleman is a matter of dispute among his servants and fellow citizens. As that second journey, during which Jesus' return is delayed, extends from the time of the ascension to the time of Luke's writing and beyond, the parable speaks directly to the character of life in a period contemporaneous with Luke's writing.

The bulk of the parable is taken up with the nobleman's relation to his servants. These are summoned prior to his journey and entrusted with the nobleman's wealth "while I go" (ἐν ᾧ ἔρχομαι, 19:13).¹⁵⁶ Upon his royal return, the servants are summoned to report on their stewardship and are rewarded variously according to the profit they have made (19:15-19). The focal point of this discourse is the "wicked servant" whose fearful excuse for his inactivity the nobleman dismisses, divesting him of his stewardship in anticipation of the saying in v.26: "To everyone who has it will be given; but as for the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away" (19:20-26).

¹⁵⁶ The NRSV here is unnecessarily periphrastic ("until I come back"). Luke's language emphasizes not the future return but the present absence of the master.

In 15 of its 17 verses, the parable reproduces the meaning of the parallel at Mt 25:14-30, where the subject is the varying effectiveness of the servants and the warning against a failure to put the master's riches to good use. Here, as at Lk 12:35-47, the prospect of the master's delay brings with it the danger of presumption on the part of the servants entrusted with the master's business. The danger of selfish abuse of wealth and status is a concern of Luke (cf. 12:20-21), and the parable of the nobleman thus addresses its warning to the apparent prospect of misadministration in the church of Luke's day. The warning may have been a corrective against an overly realized eschatology, symbolized in the servants' decision to give up on the master's return and take ownership of the house themselves (cf. Lk 17:10).¹⁵⁷ Against this supposition, the servants of Luke's day are urged toward faithful stewardship in vigilant expectation of the master's return (cf. Lk 12:40).

In addition to the warning against the servants' usurpation of their master's house, the Lukan version of this story contains the distinctive element of opposition from the nobleman's fellow citizens and their commissioning of a delegation disputing his kingship (19:14). The disputation is ignored, however, and when the nobleman returns with authority, he has "these enemies" (ἐχθρούς μου τούτους, 19:27) brought

¹⁵⁷ Paul likewise laments that early Christian leaders are in danger of arrogating undue importance to themselves (cf. 2Cor 11:5, 18; 2Cor 4:5; Gal 2:6, 4:17), at times with severe implications for the community (2Cor 11:19-20).

before him to be slaughtered. It is difficult to read this undeniably harsh judgment as anything other than the prediction of Jesus' retributory judgment upon those Jews who reject his messianic identity at his second coming. While the judgment may partly apply to those who reject Jesus as king during his earthly life,¹⁵⁸ it probably also indicates a threat to those who reject the proclamation of Jesus' royal messianic identity after his death and resurrection. Thus the disputants do not appear until *after* the nobleman's departure on his journey to receive royal power (so, ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ, v.14).¹⁵⁹ The parable thus seems not to regard as definitive the acclamation or non-acclamation of Jesus during his lifetime. The acceptance or rejection of the historical Jesus' by multitudes of his contemporaries in Israel is not conclusive for Jewish identity; rather, what matters is the response to Jesus during the period of his heavenly sojourn, the period of Christian preaching. The parable thus speaks a word of judgment against those who reject the Christian message in Luke's own time. In the context of such rejection, Paul likewise refers to those Jews who reject the Christian message as "enemies" (ἐχθροί), who are nevertheless "beloved" (ἀγαπήτοι) in Rom 11:28, where the concern is the

¹⁵⁸ So Bovon: "The parabolic story...provides us with a commentary on the Gospel as a whole" (*Luke 2*, 619).

¹⁵⁹ The phrase ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ has a primarily spatial sense: the delegation is sent to follow the nobleman. But the phrase can also have a temporal sense, which in the architecture of this narrative cannot be divorced from the spatial (cf. Eccl 6:12; Mk 1:7).

contemporary Jewish rejection of the gospel. While Paul's logic in Rom 11:28 cannot be simply read into Luke's parable, the fact that it was possible for some early Christians to regard non-Christian Jews as their "beloved enemies" should caution us against assuming that the harsh judgment the Lukan Jesus here proclaims can stand alone as Luke's univocal pronouncement on non-Christian Judaism.

Luke does not dull the edge of Jesus' words of apocalyptic judgment against his enemies. Rather, he shows Jesus turning the knife against his followers as well. The servants in the parable are not all commended; one of them, a wicked servant (πονηρὸν δούλε, 19:22), is entirely divested of his position. In the related story in Lk 12:35-48, the wicked servant who abuses the others is "cut into pieces" and assigned a place with the unbelievers (μετὰ τῶν ἀπίστων, 12:46).¹⁶⁰ The judgment against those who reject the authority of the nobleman in Lk 19:11-27, then, is similar to the judgment against those who accept his authority but abuse it. This feature of the parable suggests that the fact and severity of judgment does not arise from a basic Lukan animosity toward non-Christian Jews but from the implication, which the parables presses, of Jesus' "royal authority." The judgment at Jesus' second coming will extend to the church as well as its "enemies" and will be executed in light of the totalizing claim of Jesus' royal power. If, as Bovon asserts, the judgment of 19:27 "breathes the spirit of retaliation and

¹⁶⁰ At Mt 25:30, a parallel to Lk 19:11-27, the wicked servant is cast out into the outer darkness.

oppression,” this is nevertheless recognized by the servants, who are astonished at the judgment of the “harsh man” whose authority they acknowledge and fear (19:21-22, 25; cf. 17:10). Whatever is to be made of the character of the nobleman in the parable, the parable lacks an absolute moral contrast between his enemies and his servants, for both are subject to his coming judgment.

5.1.5 Jesus’ Lament over Jerusalem’s Destruction: Lk 19:41-44

As Jesus descends the Mount of Olives toward Jerusalem, in the midst of homage and acclamations from disciples, he beholds the city for the first time since his boyhood temple sojourn in Lk 2:41-50. As he draws near, he sees the city, foresees its destruction, and weeps over it (19:41).¹⁶¹ His arrival in the city on “this day” (τῆ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ, v.41) marks a shift in Luke’s narrative; from this point until the discussion of “that day” (ἡ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ) in Lk 21:34, Jesus speaks of what will soon take place in Jerusalem. Between the day of Jesus’ entry into the city and the eschatological day of the Son of Man (cf. Lk 17:24, 30) are the woeful “days” that “will come upon” Jerusalem (ἡξουσιν

¹⁶¹ Luke does not tell us that Jesus beheld the temple as he descended from the Mount of Olives. Though the Temple Mount was and is the most prominent feature of the city from the perspective of the Mount of Olives (cf. Let. Aris. 83-34), and though Luke retains the Markan narrative of Jesus’ immediate entrance into the temple in 19:45, the object of his vision and lament is the city itself, a synecdoche for the nation.

ἡμέραι ἐπὶ σὲ) when its enemies will surround it with ramparts and crush the city with its children to the ground “because you did not recognize the time of your visitation” (19:43-44).¹⁶² The destruction of Jerusalem is thus said to be the result of the city’s failure to recognize Jesus’ royal authority on the day of his first advent.

It is toward this moment that the entire travel narrative has been pressing, and Luke underscores the import of Jesus’ arrival in the city by, once again, bringing forward into the travel narrative sayings located in the apocalyptic discourse in Mark. In this case, however, the transposition of this material into the earlier context creates two doublets, which imbue the entry with new eschatological significance. On the brink of the city, as Jesus is “drawing near” (19:41), he announces that not one stone of the city will be left on another (καὶ οὐκ ἀφήσουσιν λίθον ἐπὶ λίθον, 19:44). This saying is in nearly verbatim agreement with that in the apocalyptic discourse two chapters later (οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται λίθος ἐπὶ λίθῳ, 21:6), on which it is modeled and which is itself dependent on the saying and context of Mk 13:2. While the latter saying is spoken in a midst of a discussion about the temple (21:5) and so refers specifically to its destruction, in 19:44 it is the city as a whole whose fate Jesus laments. Likewise, the statement in the apocalyptic discourse that the city will be “surrounded (κυκλουμένην) by armies” (21:20) is anticipated in 19:43 by the lament that “they will surround you

¹⁶² Being overtaken by the “day” is an idiom drawn from the prophets (e.g. Is 13:9, 47:9; Zeph 2:2); cf. Bovon, *Luke 3*, 18.

(περικυκλώσουσίν σε) and besiege you from every side.” Through these intratextual connections, as well as in the redaction in Lk 21:7-36 of the Markan apocalypse, the future judgment of Jerusalem is correlated with Jesus’ momentous arrival in the city.

The Lukan Jesus appears to claim that the destruction under Titus was God’s retributive judgment upon the city for its failure to recognize God’s visitation to Jerusalem in the person of Jesus (19:44, cf. 7:16). The explicit correlation of these two events is unique to Luke’s presentation of Jesus’ entry into the city.¹⁶³ Also unique to Luke, however, is the image of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem’s destruction and lamenting its apparent inevitability. The crushing of Jerusalem’s children (ἐδαφιοῦσίν σε καὶ τὰ τέκνα σου ἐν σοί, v.44) under the hand of Rome is not an image in which Jesus takes joy, for he has longed to gather together those children (ἐπισυνάξει τὰ τέκνα σου, 13:34). Jesus’ wish that the city would recognize “the things that make for peace” (τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην, 19:42) is like the longing of Zechariah that God would deliver Israel from its enemies and guide the nation “into the ways of peace” (εἰς ὁδὸν εἰρήνης, 1:79; cf. 1:71, 74). Fisk argues compellingly that, in view of Luke’s apparently passionate but frustrated hope for Israel’s full acceptance of Jesus, the tragic tone of lament should

¹⁶³ Luke was not necessarily the first to correlate these events. The guilt and destruction of the city may have been correlated in Paul’s statement in 1Thess 2:16. Luke is unique, however, in situating that judgment within the prophetic interpretation of Israel’s history, as is particularly evident in Acts 7:2-53.

militate against reading a spirit of triumphalism into Jesus' prediction of destruction.¹⁶⁴ Hays likewise observes that Jesus' lament over Jerusalem's destruction echoes similar laments among the biblical prophets and thus does not fundamentally undermine hopes for Israel's liberation, which the prophets shared, and of which Jesus, in Luke's view, remains the effective agent despite his prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction.¹⁶⁵ In fact, Jesus' prophetic lament expresses two paradoxical convictions about Israel: it is simultaneously the people of God's special love *and* the recipient of God's exacting judgment. This is the "sticky wicket," as Sanders has called it, in Luke's attitude toward the Jews, but this paradox cannot be "solved" exegetically through deconstruction of one of its parts. It is a real paradox, which Luke is content to allow to stand, even if it confuses his own characters (cf. Acts 1:6-7) as well as many modern readers.

¹⁶⁴ See Bruce N. Fisk, "See My Tears: A Lament for Jerusalem," 147-200. Sanders dismisses the tears of Jesus without comment: "If in 13.34 there is a note of sadness in prospect of the coming destruction...no such element blurs the consistency here of accusation and destruction, destruction and accusation...There is no lament here, but rather a 'sentence-curse' (*The Jews in Luke-Acts*, 210; citing Jerome H. Neyrey, "Jesus' Address to the Women of Jerusalem (Lk 23.27-31)—A Prophetic Judgment Oracle," *NTS* 29 (1983): 80). Sanders's argument draws no support from Neyrey's, however, for Neyrey repeatedly affirms the unity of the Lukan perspective in Lk 13:34-35, 19:41-44, and 23:27-31, which for him is grounded in the prophetic lamentation over the judgment of Jerusalem (Neyrey, "Jesus' Address," 76-79).

¹⁶⁵ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 240, 258.

Luke does not resolve this paradox, either through dogmatic speculation or through a *Heilsgeschichte* that transfers the blessings of God from an unbelieving Israel to the church. For Luke, the promises of God do not reach their fulfillment even with the resurrection and ascension of Jesus and the establishment of the church, whose twelve apostles form the nexus of a recapitulated (and ethnically Jewish) Israel.¹⁶⁶ Rather, history continues on after the destruction, and Israel *kata sarka* continues along with it. Following the resurrection, the second great surprise in the history of the early church was that the end did not come immediately (Lk 21:9).¹⁶⁷ Instead, the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem anticipated a second, analogous event, in which Jesus, having received royal authority, was expected to return again to the city to inaugurate “the restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21).¹⁶⁸ About that more distant event, Luke, like the early church

¹⁶⁶ See Jervell, “The Twelve on Israel’s Thrones,” in *Luke and the People of God*, 75-112.

¹⁶⁷ On the role of apocalyptic expectation in reconstructing the early Jerusalem church, see especially the forthcoming work of Paula Fredriksen, *When Christians Were Jews: The First Generation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

¹⁶⁸ Luke does not elaborate the character of the ἀποκαταστάσις or its χρόνος, but the totality (πάντων) envisioned at Acts 3:21 almost certainly includes the restoration of the kingdom to Israel requested at Acts 1:6 (εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ). The answer of Jesus, that it is not for the disciples to know “the times or epochs” set by the Father, does not undermine the expectation of Israel’s restoration but only the possibility of knowing exactly when it will occur (cf. Lk 17:20-21).

generally, has relatively little to say beyond a conviction of its certainty. At the time of Luke's writing, however, Jerusalem had experienced judgment at the hands of Rome. In addition to prophesying this judgment with tears, Jesus' words gesture to the possibility of a future hope: "He wept over the city, saying, 'If only you had known on this day, even you, the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes'" (νῦν δὲ ἐκρύβη ἀπὸ ὀφθαλμῶν σου, 19:41-2). The temporal modifier "now" hints at the possibility of a future in which what is presently hidden will be revealed.

Luke does not here explicate this hope, but the statement, made in the passive voice, that things of peace have been hidden from Israel, recalls the similar language about the blindness of the people, which is brought about by God's command, in Is 6:9-10, "Go and say to this people...look, but do not perceive! For the heart of this people is dulled (ἐπαχύνθη γὰρ ἡ καρδία) ..., and they close their eyes (τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν ἐκάμυσαν)." In the face of God's negative judgment about the people's ability to accept the prophetic message, Isaiah immediately asks a question that would be an appropriate response to the Lukan Jesus' lament as well: "How long, O Lord?" (Is 6:11). The divine response to Isaiah includes a cascade of future judgments that culminates in the image of Israel as a felled tree, in which the holy seed of Abraham resides in a stump, a symbol of deadness and destruction that also contains a future hope (Is 6:13). Isaiah's text is not overtly signaled in Lk 19:41-44, but in view of the importance of Is 6:9-10 in Luke-Acts as a text that explicates the mystery of Israel's rejection of the gospel, the

intertextual allusion is loud enough to support the arguments of Fisk and Hays that Jesus' word of judgment in Lk 19:41-44 may yet contain a hope for an Israel that is presently blinded—even if that hope is not realized in the time of Jesus or of Luke (νῦν δὲ ἐκρούβη). Luke's judgement against unbelieving Israel, like Isaiah's, is situated in a wider discourse whose imagery promises a future hope.¹⁶⁹

5.2 Conclusion: The Journey as Luke's Narrative Instruction for a Kerygmatic Life

If the Lukan Jesus, at the close of the travel narrative, speaks a prophetic word against Jerusalem that includes a lament over the blindness of the people and a cryptic intimation of a hope for the removal of that blindness, such a lament would have been as relevant at the time of Luke's writing as during the lifetime of Jesus, since Israel did not cease to exist with the destruction of the temple, and Luke's occupation with the mission to the Jews in Acts confirms his thoroughgoing concern with the fate of the Jewish people. The lament may have thus served as a contemporary model for the ongoing life of the church journeying toward the kingdom of God in Jesus' footsteps in the company

¹⁶⁹ On the dynamics of Isaiah's botanical imagery within early Christian polemics, see Joel Marcus, "The Intertextual Polemic of the Markan Vineyard Parable," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Graham N. Stanton and Guy G. Stroumsa (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 211-227.

of an Israel that had rejected his teaching and life. If, as seems likely, Luke believed that the kerygma and posture of the church should be in conformity with those of its master, and if the travel narrative was a place in which, as Reicke observes, the ecclesial-didactic concerns of the evangelist are expressed, then the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem, a journey of prophetic confrontation with Israel, may serve as a model for Luke's church, which continues to sustain that kerygmatic confrontation.

The posture of this confrontation, as the speeches of Acts demonstrate explicitly, is no less prophetic than that of Jesus. Israel is repeatedly warned and occasionally excoriated for hardness of heart (Acts 2:23, 36; 3:14-15; 7:51-53; 13:46; 28:25-28). But alongside this prophetic call to repentance, the kerygma of the church contains a sustained articulation of the fidelity of God to the covenant with Israel (Acts 2:39, 3:22-25; 13:17; cf. 26:6-7) and an earnest desire for Israel's salvation (Lk 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:26; 4:10-12; 13:23-24, 32, 38). There is no ultimate denunciation but rather a pathos, akin to that of Lk 19:41-44, in Paul's appeal to the Jews of Rome to realize that "It is for the sake of the hope of *Israel* that I am bound with this chain" (Acts 28:20). That chain, with which Paul has been bound metaphorically for seven long chapters (cf. Acts 21:33), is a Jewish chain in two senses. On the one hand, Paul has been hounded and literally bound through the accusations of Jews who should see their hopes fulfilled in his gospel but do not. On the other hand, Luke's commitment to Paul's gospel as the fulfillment of Israel's hope in the resurrection of the dead (cf. Acts 2:24-32) compels him to keep Paul

tethered to Judaism, however contested the relationship may be. In this way Luke himself cannot let go of non-Christian Jews, for their identity, in his view, is bound up with that of the church.

6. Jesus and the Crises of Jerusalem

6.1 Two Crises in Jerusalem

The interpretation of the travel narrative advanced above, according to which the delayed entry of Jesus into Jerusalem prefigures the situation of the church that journeys with Jesus toward the eschaton in sustained prophetic engagement with those of Israel who reject its claims about Jesus, finds confirmation in Luke's shaping of Jesus' Jerusalem discourses, a shaping in which two coming crises in Israel are indicated. These crises—the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus and the final judgment with the second coming of Christ—are principally focused on Israel and the church, though the entire world is also in view in the latter. This is evident in Luke's version of the parable of the vineyard and its wicked tenants.

6.1.1 The Parable of the Vineyard: Lk 20:9-19

After Jesus' expulsion of the temple merchants and his provocative denunciation of the temple's moral condition (19:45-46), Luke presents several scenes of Jesus teaching in the temple and receiving a warm reception by the Jerusalem populace. In these temple encounters, which follow Mk 11:27-12:44 closely, Luke shows Jesus consistently besting the chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people as he wins the affection of the

masses.¹⁷⁰ Whereas in Mark the positive reception in the temple is among the “crowd” (ὄχλος, Mk 11:18, 32; 12:12, 37), in Luke it is consistently the “people” who welcome his temple teaching (ὁ λαός, 19:48, 20:1, 6, 9, 19, 45; 21:38; 22:2). In the list of Jesus’ opponents, Luke 19:47 adds to Mark’s “chief priests and scribes” (Mk 11:18) a third category: the “prominent ones from the people” (οἱ πρῶτοι τοῦ λαοῦ). The addition is immediately followed, however, by the statement that “*all the people* hung on his words” (ὁ λαὸς ἅπας, 19:48). Consequently, the genitive τοῦ λαοῦ at 19:47 may be partitive: “leaders *who arose from* the people.” Bovon reasonably interprets the preceding καὶ epexegetically: “the chief priests and scribes—that is, the leaders from among the people.”¹⁷¹ But even if the πρῶτοι are taken as representatives of the people, in anticipation of the guilt of the people as a whole, Luke still contrasts their desire to kill Jesus with the attitude of ὁ λαὸς ἅπας. There is thus an indication of an internal division, for the people are both drawn to Jesus positively *and*, in the persons of their leaders, opposed to him. As we observed in the previous chapter with regard to Luke’s use of ὁ λαός in the central section of his gospel, this terminology carries with it an

¹⁷⁰ Luke replaces the reference to Pharisees and Herodians at Mk 12:13 with “spies” (παρατηρήσαντες, Lk 20:20). He appropriately retains the presence of Sadducees at the dispute over the resurrection (Mk 12:18-27; Lk 20:27-40; cf. Acts 23:8) and supplies “scribes and chief priests” at 20:19 to make explicit the group indicted in the parable of the vineyard (cf. the ambiguous “they” Mk 12:12).

¹⁷¹ Bovon, *Luke* 3, 21.

overtone of national identity that is absent in the term “crowd.”¹⁷² The final chapters of Jesus’ teaching ministry thus underscore what was evident earlier in the gospel: in Luke Jesus addresses himself, both in his ministry and in his final days in Jerusalem, to the people of Israel.

In Mark, the parable of the vineyard is focused on the chief priests and scribes, who understand rightly that “he spoke this parable against them” (Mk 12:12). Mark introduces the parable with the statement, “He began to speak to *them* (αὐτοῖς) in parables” (Mk 12:1). The pronoun αὐτοῖς refers to the chief priests, scribes, and elders mentioned in Mk 11:27, with whom Jesus was speaking in the scene immediately prior to the parable.¹⁷³ In Luke, however, Jesus addresses the parable “to the people” (ἤρξατο δὲ πρὸς τὸν λαὸν λέγειν τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην, 20:9). Luke retains the Markan statement at the conclusion of the parable that the opponents of Jesus sought to kill him but were afraid of the people, and this fear is explained in the same manner as Mark,

¹⁷² Bovon observes this alteration but assigns its significance to the “ecclesiastical connotation” of λαός, though without giving a rationale for this interpretation (*Luke* 3, 43). The term is explicitly associated with Israel no fewer than six times by Luke (Lk 1:68, 2:23; Acts 4:10, 27, 13:17, 24). It refers consistently to the Jewish nation (cf. Acts 26:17). Acts 15:14 is Luke’s only use of λαός with respect to Christian gentiles, whom God has now taken as “a people for his own name,” but here the use depends on a parallel with Israel, God’s first people (so Acts 15:15-17).

¹⁷³ So Cranfield, *St. Mark*, 364. Mk 12:1-12 is thus an extended response to the challenges to Jesus’ authority in Mk 11:27-33.

adjusted according to Luke's distinctive focus on the people: "But they feared the people [Mk: *the crowd*], for they knew that he spoke this parable to them" (καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν τὸν λαόν, ἔγνωσαν γὰρ ὅτι πρὸς αὐτοὺς εἶπεν τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην, 20:19).

Commentators generally understand the subject of the verb ἔγνωσαν and the antecedent of αὐτοὺς as Jesus' opponents, so that the meaning here is essentially the same as that of the Markan episode: the chief priests and scribes know that Jesus spoke the parable *against them* as the wicked tenants of the vineyard. Consequently, they are afraid of inciting the people by fulfilling the role assigned to them by Jesus in the parable.¹⁷⁴ This reading is coherent and plausible: it retains a consistent subject for the active verbs in vv.19-20 (ἐζήτησαν...καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν ...ἔγνωσαν γὰρ ...καὶ παρατήρησαντες ἀπέστειλαν), and it provides a meaningful rationale for the surreptitious actions of the opponents that follow. But it is not the best reading.

As we have observed, the Lukan preface to the parable contains the statement, which Luke has explicitly reworked from his source, that Jesus spoke the parable to the

¹⁷⁴ So Bovon, *Luke* 3, 44; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1287. Sanders affirms this reading but also sees the parable as referring to "the rejection of the Jews" in favor of "the Gentiles who are soon to replace the Jews as the objects of God's salvation." The claim is grounded in the observation that the people appear scandalized by the parable (ἀκούσαντες δὲ εἶπαν· μὴ γένοιτο, 20:16; Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts*, 212-213). There is no indication, however, that the people thereby understand themselves as the tenants; rather, they hope that the *rulers* will be saved from the judgment (so Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1285).

people (πρὸς τὸν λαόν, 20:9). It is thus reasonable to ask whether the sentence ἔγνωσαν γὰρ ὅτι πρὸς αὐτούς εἶπεν τὴν παραβολήν at 20:19 is coordinate with the earlier statement that the parable is addressed to *the people*. If so, the subject of ἔγνωσαν may be the people, who understand the meaning of the parable with respect to themselves and the present Jerusalem leadership. On this reading, 20:19 means that the scribes and chief priests feared the people because the people understood that Jesus had spoken this parable to them (i.e. to the people and their leaders).¹⁷⁵

Three considerations support this claim. Firstly, the most proximal noun to the verb ἔγνωσαν is λαός. It is thus not grammatically awkward to regard the people as the subject of the verb. Moreover, it is the people's knowledge of Jesus' meaning, not the leaders' knowledge, which poses the *threat* to the leaders' authority, for it is the agency of the people—for example, in their ability to shape political situations through riot (cf. Mk 14:2)—that causes the leaders to fear the people. Secondly, the interpretation of πρὸς αὐτούς as “against the leaders” in Luke depends largely upon this being the meaning of the text in Mark. If this is indeed the meaning in Mk 12:12,¹⁷⁶ it is awkward, for nowhere else in Mark does πρὸς function in such an unambiguously adversative

¹⁷⁵ This alternative is grammatical despite the shift in number between λαόν and αὐτούς, since the former is a collective noun. See, e.g., Lk 1:77: τοῦ δοῦναι γινῶσιν σωτηρίας τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν.

¹⁷⁶ So Marcus, *Mark*, 2:809.

manner.¹⁷⁷ But as *πρός* does not function this way anywhere else in Luke-Acts, an adversative meaning of the phrase at Lk 20:19 appears unlikely. Thirdly, in Luke, the phrase *πρός αὐτούς* frequently indicates the addressees of direct speech, particularly as an introduction to parables (see Lk 5:36, 12:41, 14:7, 18:9, 20:9). At 20:19, then, *πρός* likely means what it meant at 20:9: “He spoke this parable *to* them.” The pronoun *αὐτούς*, however, has a wider scope of reference, for the preceding narrative makes it clear that Jesus has spoken the parable to the people *and* the leaders.

This reading has the virtue of making sense of the parable as it relates to the people to whom it is addressed at 20:9. The parable is not primarily a story about tenants. Tenants require a tenement; or, to put the matter in Greek, *γεωργοί* require a *γῆ*—in this case a vineyard. The parable is firstly about the *vineyard* that was planted well but has been mismanaged by evil tenants who will soon be vanquished, while the vineyard is transferred to new management. There is no question that the *γεωργοί* in the parable stand for chief priests and scribes. But the tenants are defined by their relation to the vineyard, for whose lack of fruit they are responsible. If Luke’s use of *πρός αὐτούς* is allowed its regular meaning of “to them” at 20:19, in agreement with the phrase *πρός τὸν λαόν* at 20:9, this alternative draws out a distinctive element of Luke’s

¹⁷⁷ Even in situations of conflict (e.g. Mk 7:1, 9:14,16), *πρός* with an accusative object appears to have a primarily spatial significance, as it almost always does in Mark. An adversative meaning could be read at Mk 10:5, but it is more likely explanatory: “*because of your hardness of heart*” (so the NRSV).

redaction: the parable explicates the fate of the gathered people of Israel, who will soon be transferred *en masse* to the new oversight of the apostles (Acts 2:41, 4:4, 21:20). It is, then, a parable about the people and its destiny as much as about the leadership and its replacement.

This reading is strengthened by considering the background of this parable in the similar parable of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-6. In that parable, a vineyard is carefully planted and tended but yields no fruit (Is 5:1-2). There are no tenants in Isaiah's parable, and the judgment for the lack of production thus falls upon the vineyard itself: its hedge and wall will be removed, and God "will abandon" it (ἀνήσω, Is 5:6 LXX). Isaiah's parable, like that of Jesus, is a word of judgment spoken with regard to the people: "For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his beloved planting" (Is 5:7 LXX). If the point of Jesus' parable, like Isaiah's, is to relate God's dealings with Israel, then the introduction to the parable in Luke (Ἦρξατο δὲ πρὸς τὸν λαὸν λέγειν τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· ἄνθρωπός τις ἐφύτευσε ἀμπελῶνα..., Lk 20:9) is roughly parallel to the interpretive comment ἀμπελῶν κυρίου σαβαωθ οἶκος τοῦ Ἰσραηλ at Is 5:7.¹⁷⁸ If Luke's re-telling of Mark's version of Isaiah's parable places an emphasis upon the parable's meaning for the people to whom it is addressed, it is this meaning that is the ground of the leaders' fear. The parable draws a

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Marcus's discussion of the similarities and differences between Isaiah's parable and that of the gospels in "The Intertextual Polemic of the Markan Vineyard Parable," 214-221.

distinction between the vineyard and its wicked tenants. The people who hang on Jesus' words (19:48) now stand ready, the leaders fear, to oppose their leadership, for their authority is challenged not only through the parable but also in the rest of the chapter through Jesus' consistent silencing of their interrogations (20:7, 26, 39-40; cf. Mk 12:34b).

The division between the leaders and the people indicated in the parable suggests that Luke's parable may be somewhat less 'supercessionist' than Mark's. In Mark, as in Luke, what happens to the vineyard is undeniably a transfer from one custodial body to "others" (δώσει τὸν ἀμπελῶνα ἄλλοις, Mk 12:9; cf. Lk 20:16). Marcus has argued that in Mark this transfer refers not simply to a change in *leadership* of the Jewish people but to "the transfer of the salvation-historical prerogatives of Israel to the church."¹⁷⁹ Among the several reasons he adduces is the probable setting of Mark's gospel in the immediate aftermath of the Jewish Revolt, in which the Jewish people were dispossessed of their limited national sovereignty by the Romans. For gentile readers in such a setting, the parable would carry the strong suggestion that that God had abandoned *Israel*, his vineyard, in favor of the gentiles.¹⁸⁰ The suggestion that Mark's readers, like many Christian readers since, may have understood the parable in this way is plausible. However, Marcus' reading fails to do justice to the distinction Jesus' parable makes between the vineyard and its tenants—a distinction absent in the parable

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 212.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 216-19.

in Is 5:1-7. For Marcus, the driving question is not what the vineyard symbolizes but, “Who are the tenant farmers...and who are the ‘others?’”¹⁸¹ The answer that these characters stand for Israel and the gentiles, respectively, results in an erosion of the distinction between the vineyard and those who tend it. Marcus carefully explains that a firm distinction between the people and its leadership is not maintained in Mark’s gospel (e.g. Mk 15:11-15), and the distinction is not part of Isaiah’s parable at all.¹⁸² But if the distinction between the vineyard and its tenants carries so little weight for the parable’s meaning, we may be justified in asking why the Markan Jesus has introduced that distinction at all through the creation of characters absent in Is 5:1-7.

This distinction between the vineyard and its tenants is important in Luke, for Luke’s Jesus addresses and orients the parable to the people as a whole, whose identity as God’s beloved nation Luke is at pains to stress in a way that Mark is not (Lk 1:68, 77, 2:10, 7:16; Acts 13:16-24, 31). Though Luke certainly understands the death of the “beloved son” (Lk 20:13) and the violent transfer of leadership that ensues to constitute a

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 211-12.

¹⁸² Marcus rightly observes that the vineyard of Isaiah “is not simply the leadership of Israel but ‘the inhabitants of Jerusalem,’ ‘the men of Judah’ and ‘the house of Israel’ (Isa. 5:3, 7) – i.e. Israel as a whole.” Contrary to Marcus, however (“Polemic,” 213), it is unclear that this meaning of the vineyard in Isaiah provides an interpretive context that informs the meaning of *both* terms—the vineyard and its tenants—in Mark’s more developed parable.

crisis, that crisis does not result in a church that supersedes Israel.¹⁸³ Rather, Luke is at pains to show the unbroken continuity between Israel and the church, and that continuity is indicated in the parable not by the *destruction* of the vineyard (as, for example, in Is 5:5-6) but by its preservation through a transfer of leadership. Taking the terms of the parable as the proper parameters of its logic helps us to avoid reading it through its reception history, in which the imagery of the vineyard of Israel was mostly lost and the parable became an uncontrolled allegory for the church's dispossession of Israel's salvation-historical significance.¹⁸⁴ My reading of a limited transfer of leadership is consistent, moreover, with what is said of the apostles at Lk 22:30. They "will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of *Israel*" — the original one — as a new body of unlikely patriarchs. Such a claim, uttered in the midst of the current temple leadership officials, is offensive, divisive, and provocative. That it results in a conspiracy to destroy Jesus in Luke's gospel, as in Mark's, is hardly surprising.

¹⁸³ Bovon's statement, in comment upon this passage, that "the Christian tradition has rethought and expanded the concept of the people of God," has no exegetical purchase beyond indicating that the displacement of the tenants by "others" in 20:16 provides a textual point of departure for various configurations of identity and alterity in the early church (*Luke* 3, 42). Sanders' claim that it is gentiles *simpliciter* who replace the Jews is entirely untenable (*The Jews in Luke-Acts*, 213).

¹⁸⁴ For a brief survey of reception history of the parable, see Bovon, *Luke* 3, 44-46.

6.1.2 The Apocalyptic Discourse: Lk 21:5-36

Jesus' apocalyptic discourse in Jerusalem presents one of the most challenging texts in the synoptic gospels, and I make no attempt here to resolve every interpretive question raised by Lk 21:5-36 and its parallels in Mk 13 and Mt 24. Rather, in what follows I sketch the distinctive shape Luke has given to this discourse in order to investigate the significance of Luke's version of it for the present questions, namely, how Luke presents the encounter between Jesus and Jerusalem, what might be learned from this presentation about Luke's posture toward Jews, and how that posture might reflect his social situation. We begin with what can only be a brief assessment of Mark 13, Luke's principal source for this discourse.

One of the chief questions that faces the interpretation of this passage is the timing of the events it describes. It begins with a discussion between Jesus and his disciples about the temple's large stones and buildings, which Jesus declares "will all be thrown down" (Mk 13:2). His disciples then ask him when "all these things" (ταῦτα πάντα, 13:4) will be accomplished, anticipating the discourse that follows, which unfolds an apocalyptic drama: persecution of the apostolic community (13:9-13), great suffering (13:15-20), confusion over false messiahs (13:21-22), the desecration of the temple (13:14), heavenly portents, including "the Son of Man coming in the clouds" (13:24-27), and finally the end (τὸ τέλος, 13:7,13). Although interpreters disagree about how these elements may or may not be schematized into a coherent discourse, there is a

general consensus that the events here described relate to the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E. and the anticipated cataclysmic end of the world.¹⁸⁵ The distressing events of 70 C.E. appear to be discussed particularly in 13:5-23, while 13:24-27, 32-37 describe the cosmic coming of the Son of Man with his angels to gather his elect. The parable of the fig tree in 13:28-31 relates to the disciples' request for a "sign" of the times (13:4), and certain foreboding signs seem to be offered in the appearance of earthquakes, wars, and famines (13:8), the desolating sacrilege ("when you see...let the reader understand," 13:14), and the appearance of false messiahs (13:22)—events that appear to be harbingers of an imminent catastrophe. "But about *that day* or its hour"—the day of the Son of Man's coming—"no one knows...not even the Son" (13:32).

The contrast between anticipation of these events, which is encouraged through reference to these signs and the parable of the fig tree, and speculation about *that day*, which is discouraged, strengthens the likelihood that two distinct series of events are envisioned. One event is anticipated imminently in the political arena, while another is vigilantly watched for as an impending cosmic deliverance. The distinction is strengthened if the statement at 13:24, "But in *those days, after that suffering*" (ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην), marks a chronological contrast

¹⁸⁵ Whether or not these events were regarded as concurrent by Mark, his sources, or the historical Jesus is a question that is not relevant for the present study. For a discussion of these questions and possible solutions, see Marcus, *Mark*, 2:864-923.

between the account of the temple's destruction, which has a concluding comment at v.23, and the advent of the Son of Man in 13:24-26 (cf. vv.32-37). It must be admitted, however, that even if these two events are distinguishable (perhaps they were distinct in the tradition prior to Mark), they are nevertheless closely associated in the second gospel in a discourse that presents difficulties for any interpretation.¹⁸⁶

What Mark appears to have juxtaposed Luke has thoroughly conflated, folding elements of Mark's later eschatological section (13:24-26) into the earlier account of the temple's destruction, so that the destruction is presented as concurrent with the coming of the Son of Man. Thus, at Lk 21:11, parallel with Mk 13:8, Luke includes along with the wars, earthquakes, and famines, the statement from later in the discourse that there will be "dreadful portents and great signs from heaven" (Mk 13:24-25; cf. Lk 21:25). Luke smooths the transition at 21:25 (using simple parataxis: καὶ ἔσονται...), omitting both the conclusion at Mk 13:23 that brings Mark's first section to a close and the

¹⁸⁶ Marcus disputes this claim, suggesting instead that Mark, like the historical Jesus, closely associated the destruction of the temple with the immediate or near-immediate end of the world. It may be observed, however, that the non-conclusion at Mk 13:23b (ἰδοὺ προεἶρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα) appears to be a literary seam between two sections, which may have originally been independent of each other, as suggested by the differing statements about how the times may be discerned. In 13:28-31, Jesus speaks of an event whose imminence is known, only to insist at 13:32, that "about *that* day or hour, no one knows." The text is thus awkward on any interpretation.

temporal distinction at Mk 13:24 that contrasts what follows with what has preceded (“But in *those* days, after *that* tribulation...”).

In Mark, moreover, the vision of “the Son of Man coming in a cloud” (13:26) is the same vision in which the heavenly lights are put out (13:24), the stars fall to earth (13:25), and the angels are sent to gather the elect from the earth (13:27). The Son of Man’s coming thus seems to bring to culmination the end of the world. In Luke, the same complex of events appears, but it lacks the totalizing finality of the end. Instead of a total darkening, there are “signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and on the earth distress...fear, and expectation of what *is coming* (ἐπερχομένων) upon the world” (21:25-26). The elect are not saved by angels but are instructed to prepare for that salvation: “When these things *begin to take place* (ἀρχομένων δὲ τούτων γίνεσθαι), stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is *drawing near* (ἐγγίζει)” (21:28). The coming of the Son of Man in these verses is cataclysmic and awful, but it is not (yet) the end of the world. This coming, is however, associated with the destruction of the Jerusalem through the coordination of Lk 21:25-28 with the description of the city’s destruction in 21:20-24, a coordination that obtains both through Luke’s non-distinction of the oracle of the city’s destruction from the apocalyptic signs of the end and Luke’s omission of the chronological distinction present at the beginning of Mk 13:24-26, the section that parallels Lk 21:25-28. In Luke’s arrangement, then, the coming of the Son of Man is closely associated with the destruction of Jerusalem, which, together with the

Son of Man's coming, is one of the signs of the end, which will eventually come, but has not yet arrived. Fitzmyer helpfully summarizes Luke's shaping of this discourse:

The Lucan discourse looks back at the catastrophe in Jerusalem (A.D. 70) in a microcosmic view; it sees the crisis that the earthly coming of Jesus brought into the lives of his own generation but sees it now as a harbinger of the crisis which Jesus and his message, and above all his coming as the Son of Man, will bring to "all who dwell upon the entire face of the earth" (21:35).¹⁸⁷

What we have observed in the travel narrative regarding the conflation of the first and second comings thus also applies to the apocalyptic discourse in Jerusalem, in which the destruction of Jerusalem is cryptically presented as the result of the Son of Man's portentous arrival.

The destruction of Jerusalem is thus the result of the crisis brought about by Jesus' advent. Luke's redactional tendency is articulated clearly in Jesus' statement in Lk 21:22 that "these are days of vengeance as a fulfillment of all that is written" and the announcement in 21:23 of "wrath against this people (ὀργὴ τῶ λαῶ τούτῳ)." Yet the reference to the fulfilling of "all that is written" frames the prediction of the people being

¹⁸⁷ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1329.

taken “as captives among all the gentiles” (21:24) in a Deuteronomic pattern of sin, judgment, and exile. Recognizing Luke’s signaling of this biblical pattern is significant for interpreting his presentation of Jerusalem’s destruction and ensuing “exile.” To the dire description of Jerusalem’s deserved destruction Luke adds the prediction that “Jerusalem will be trampled on by gentiles until the times of the gentiles are fulfilled” (ἄχρι οὗ πληρωθῶσιν καιροὶ ἐθνῶν, 21:24b). This temporal clause suggests that, despite the vigor with which God’s wrath is asserted against Israel, that wrath has an expiration date.

It is possible, to be sure, that the phrase “until the fulfillment of the times of the gentiles” indicates not the temporal endpoint of the trampling of Jerusalem by gentiles but the enduring state of gentile dominance resulting from Rome’s “trampling.” Fitzmyer asserts that this must be the meaning of the phrase, though he gives no explanation for this claim.¹⁸⁸ On his reading, the prepositional phrase does not express a temporal limitation; rather, it explains the situation (“fulfillment”) that brought to completion the action of the finite verb (“trampling”). The verbal phrase πληρωθῶσιν καιροὶ ἐθνῶν thus has a durative temporal meaning (“bringing the time of the gentiles to its fullness”).

¹⁸⁸ For Fitzmyer, Luke means that, “When the ‘end’ of Jerusalem comes, the pagans take over” (*Luke*, 2:1347). So Sanders, *Jews in Luke-Acts*, 218-219; Green, *Luke*, 739. Green’s dubious claim that this verse “portends the proclamation of the good news among the Gentiles” is without justification.

Yet neither of these grammatical conditions is likely. In classical and Hellenistic Greek generally, when ἄχρι is used in a prepositional phrase with a temporal sense, it expresses the *terminus ad quem* of the finite verb,¹⁸⁹ and this is its meaning in 14 of Luke's 18 other uses (cf. Lk 1:20, 4:13, 17:27; Acts 1:2, 2:29, 3:21, 7:18, 13:11, 20:6, 20:11, 22:4, 22:22, 23:1, 26:22).¹⁹⁰ Likewise, in every other instance in which Luke uses πληρόω with reference to time, the phrase is used to demarcate not the fulfillment of a previously ongoing action but the arrival at a distinctive point in time that marks the end of an earlier period and/or the transition to a new period (cf. ἐν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀναλήμψεως αὐτοῦ, Lk 9:51; ἐν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς πεντηκοστῆς Acts 2:1; ὡς δὲ ἐπληροῦτο αὐτῷ τεσσαρακονταετῆς χρόνος, Acts 7:23; ὡς δὲ ἐπληροῦντο ἡμέραι ἰκαναί, Acts 9:23; διαγγέλλων τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν τῶν ἡμερῶν, Acts 21:26).¹⁹¹ Accordingly, in Lk 21:24b, ἄχρι οὗ πληρωθῶσιν καιροὶ ἐθνῶν probably means "until the time of the gentiles is over." This conclusion agrees with the statement's immediate context, for Jerusalem's desolation already appears complete

¹⁸⁹ See LSJ §19225-26; Smyth §1700, 2383.

¹⁹⁰ It has a spatial meaning at Acts 11:5, 13:6, 28:15. Only at Acts 27:33 does ἄχρι introduce an action that is contemporaneous with the finite verb; see BDF §455(3).

¹⁹¹ Luke's use of this idiom as a chronological transition is derived from the Septuagint, the grammar of which is based on the underlying Hebrew. See among many examples, Gen 25:24, 29:21, 50:3; Ex 7:25, Esth 2:15; Tob 14:5; cf. Mk 1:5; Gal 4:4.

when its inhabitants are said to “fall by the edge of the sword and be taken away as captives among *all the nations*” (αἰχμαλωτισθήσονται εἰς τὰ ἔθνη πάντα, 21:24a). Pace Fitzmyer, the best interpretation of the phrase ἄχρι οὗ that follows is that “Jerusalem’s humiliation, its desolation, will be limited.”¹⁹²

This reference to the fulfillment of the times of the gentiles recalls an equally cryptic early Christian eschatological prediction of the end of gentile dominance in the church and the salvation of Israel. In Rom 11:25 Paul writes of a “mystery,” in which Israel is temporarily hardened “until the fullness of the gentiles has entered (ἄχρι οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ), after which “all Israel shall be saved” (Rom 11:26). There is a close verbal and conceptual correspondence between Lk 21:24 and Rom 11:25: each verse includes the use of ἄχρι οὗ to anticipate a time in which τὰ ἔθνη reach a fulfillment (πληρωθῶσιν/πλήρωμα), a moment that anticipates a vague but definite hope for Israel’s eventual salvation. The hope for Israel’s salvation is explicit in Rom 11:26; in Luke 21:24 it is implicit in the conviction that the “times of the gentiles,” during which Jerusalem will be trampled, will reach an end.¹⁹³

¹⁹² So Bovon, *Luke 3*, 116.

¹⁹³ While the parallel between these two passages is not altogether surprising given Luke’s positive view of Paul, it is surprising how little reflection it has received. Fitzmyer’s consideration is exhausted when he writes, “Cf. Tob 14:5; Rom 11:25” without further comment on either passage (*Luke*, 2:1347). There is no mention of Rom 11:25 in connection with Lk 21:24 by Bovon, Green, or Carroll.

Although Luke has conflated the coming of the Son of Man with the destruction of Jerusalem, he nevertheless expresses a conviction that the Son of Man will also come upon the church. Following Mk 13:32-37, the Lukan Jesus counsels the church to keep vigilant for “that day” (Lk 21:34), which “will come upon all who live on the face of all the earth (21:35). The disciples—and here we must also think of Luke’s church—are urged, “Watch out, lest your hearts be weighed down with excess and drunkenness and the worries of life” (21:34, cf. 8:14). They are called to continual prayer for strength “to stand before the Son of Man” (21:36), and if they do not, “that day”—the day of the Son of Man, in light of v.36—“may overtake you suddenly, like a trap!” (21:34-35). The Son of Man’s coming is thus ambiguously associated with both the historical destruction of Jerusalem and the ultimate eschaton, in which he will come in judgment upon the *church* and indeed the whole world (21:35; cf. Acts 17:31). The coming of the Son of Man on Jerusalem is thus not an occasion for the church’s triumphal self-assertion over Israel but a warning of a similar impending and potentially catastrophic judgment, as Cranfield explains:

Luke rightly recognized in the events of the years 66-70 a fulfilment of Jesus’ words, but it was not a fulfilment without remainder.... The new Israel like the old would be sinful and would again and again be menaced by divine judgment, and Antichrist would again and again embody himself in proud and sacrilegious

men. Thus, in the crises of history the eschatological is foreshadowed... The impending judgment on Jerusalem and the events connected with it are for Jesus, as it were, a transparent object in the foreground through which he sees the last events before the End, which they indeed foreshadow.¹⁹⁴

Cranfield's "new Israel" language is problematic as an explanation of Luke's thought.¹⁹⁵ But his basic point is right: Luke's narrative positions both the church and the old Israel together under God's judgment: "God now commands all people everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Luke thinks that no one knows about the timing of the final judgment, but he is certain about its proleptic anticipation in Jesus' visitation to Jerusalem. The typological schematization of these two events confirms the reading of the travel narrative as an allegory for the church's kerygmatic life in expectation of the purgation about to be effected through God's unpredictable coming judgment upon the church, unbelieving Israel, and the world.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Cranfield, *St Mark*, 404-405.

¹⁹⁵ On the inappropriateness of the term to describe Luke's portrayal of Israel, see Jervell, *Luke and the People of God*, 41-74, who rightly argues that "Israel" means not the church but the Jewish people *kata sarka*.

¹⁹⁶ This idea that the future judgment will come upon the Christian community and outsiders alike is widespread in early Christianity. See 1Cor 3:12-17; Rom 2:9-16; Heb 10:30, 12:25-29; 1Pet 4:17; Rev 2-3.

6.2 The Role of the Jews in the Lukan Passion Narrative

Luke's gospel draws towards its close as Jesus, after instructing the people of Israel in Jerusalem, is finally "betrayed into human hands" (9:44), and "rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes (9:22), "handed over to the gentiles, mocked, insulted, and spat upon" (18:32). The predictions of Jesus' passion, together with Luke's deliberate extension and dramatization of the moment of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, ensure that the reader is well prepared for Jesus' arrest. Despite the explicit indication in 18:32 that Jesus will be "handed over to the gentiles" (cf. Mk 10:33), certain elements in the Lukan trial scenes have given the impression that Jesus is not crucified by the Romans but by the Jews, and this has been taken to indicate a hostile posture toward Jews that anticipates later Christian anti-Judaism.¹⁹⁷ To assess this claim and to discern the shape of Luke's portrayal of the role of the Jews in the final chapters of his gospel, the remainder of this chapter surveys the scenes of arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection, seeking to relate the portrayal of Jewish responsibility for Jesus' death to Luke's presentation of the import of these events in the ongoing encounter of the nascent church with Jewish others.

¹⁹⁷ See Gaston, "Anti-Judaism," 144-150; Sanders, *Jews in Luke-Acts*, 226.

6.2.1 Arrest and Trial before the Council

As Chapter 4 has shown, Luke closely follows the Markan tradition that Jesus predicted his rejection “by the elders and the chief priest and the scribes” (Lk 9:22 // Mk 8:31; cf. Lk 9:44 // Mk 9:31). Although in the third passion prediction Luke omits Mark’s mention of these Jewish leaders and refers only to gentiles (Lk 18:32 // Mk 10:33), he is keenly aware of the role the Jewish leaders play in Jesus’ death. In fact, Luke brings nearly the whole council of the Sanhedrin into the garden of Gethsemane to arrest Jesus. In Mark, Judas leads an armed crowd that has been sent “from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders” (Mk 14:43). In Luke, however, a crowd appears out of nowhere in the garden (Ἐτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος ἰδοὺ ὄχλος, 22:47). There is no indication that they have been sent by an authoritative body because, in fact, not one of Jesus’ opponents among the leaders misses the chance to be present in person. When Jesus speaks at 22:52 he addresses himself to “the chief priest and officers of the temple and the elders.” With the exception of the scribes, who have been replaced by “officers of the temple,” the group physically present to arrest Jesus is none other than that which will shortly hand him over to Pilate. Luke thus makes the role of these authorities in Jesus’ death particularly clear. They are the ones who have come under the hour and power of darkness (22:53).

Luke places Jesus’ trial before the council on the morning after his arrest. Whereas Mark brings Jesus to the high priest for a trial by night in Mk 14:53, in Lk 22:54

Jesus is brought to the *house* of the high priest, where he awaits his trial the next morning (so Lk 22:66; cf. Mk 15:1).¹⁹⁸ Peter's denial of Jesus thus occurs the night before Jesus' trial by the council, during the night of waiting, whereas in Mark and Matthew the denial follows the trial at night. The effect of Luke's rearrangement of this material is to immediately juxtapose the trial before the Jewish council with the first trial before Pilate the gentile—trials that are separated by the account of Peter's denial and the passage of the night in Mark's gospel. The juxtaposition is significant in view of the pairing of Jewish and gentile responsibility for Jesus' death in the speeches of Acts (see Acts 2:22-23; 4:25-28). Additionally, the rearrangement juxtaposes the arrest in the garden with the account of Peter's denial. Though Luke has omitted the statement that the eleven disciples "forsook him and fled," together with Mark's image of the naked fugitive (14:55-52),¹⁹⁹ he, unlike Mark, immediately gives the pathos-steeped account of

¹⁹⁸ I regard Luke as following the outline of Mark's passion narrative, which he freely edits, interspersing material unique to him. Following Bovon, I do not regard Luke as drawing from a special passion narrative, though he likely used material from oral tradition (some of which is shared with the fourth gospel). See Bovon, *Luke 3*, 213-14.

¹⁹⁹ Though Luke does not say that the eleven all forsook Jesus, he follows Mark in showing only Peter accompanying Jesus. The picture of Jesus' disciples observing his crucifixion in 23:49 is hardly the opposite of the Markan statement of their abandonment, for, helpless to come to his aid, they keep a safe distance (Εἰστήκεισαν...ἀπὸ μακρόθεν).

Peter's denial—retaining, in this way at least, the Markan image of a Jesus forsaken by his closest friends.

When the trial before the council occurs, Luke omits the charge that Jesus claimed he would destroy and rebuild the temple (Mk 14:55-61). In light of the later claims of Jewish opponents that Stephen and Paul speak against the temple (Acts 6:13, 21:28), claims that Luke regards as false, the omission is intelligible as an attempt to remove confusion about Jesus' theological attitude toward the temple. As we have observed, the temple is central to the birth narratives and is the place in which Jesus seems to be most at home (so Lk 2:49). The charges against Stephen and Paul are presented by Luke as stemming from the era of the early church, and it is likely that accusations of temple infidelity were used to castigate the Christian movement as sectarian. Luke, who understands the gospel message to be "nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place," disputes this charge.²⁰⁰

Positively, the omission of the charge of speech against the temple focuses the council's examination of Jesus on a single issue: whether or not he is the Christ (22:67),

²⁰⁰ The Lukan Paul sounds defensive when he protests his fidelity to Israel's worship "according to the Way, which they call a sect" (κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν ἣν λέγουσιν αἴρεσιν, Acts 24:14). Luke is probably responding here to Jewish derision of the Christian sect, an interpretation that coheres with the claim of the Roman Jews that "this sect is everywhere spoken against" (τῆς αἰρέσεως ταύτης γνωστὸν ἡμῖν ἔστιν ὅτι πανταχοῦ ἀντιλέγεται, Acts 28:22).

the son of God (22:70). This, as Luke sees it, is the point of difference between the church and the synagogue, not the question of the temple, to which Luke's characters are generally loyal.²⁰¹ In bringing this single issue to the fore, the obscure discussion of the temple's destruction and rebuilding is avoided (cf. Mk 14:58; Mt 26:60-61). Instead, Luke focuses in clear language on what would become the principal point of dispute between Christians and non-Christian Jews, as the polemical literature on both sides of ancient Jewish/Christian debates makes clear—the identity of Jesus.²⁰² While in Mark the high priest asks Jesus in a single question whether he is “the Christ, the son of the

²⁰¹ This claim is generally disputed with regard to Stephen, whose speech is widely regarded as both anti-Jewish and anti-temple. See Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, trans. Bernard Noble and Gerald Shinn (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 290; Matthews, *Perfect Martyr*. Luke, however, regards those who charge Stephen with speaking against the temple, the law, and the customs of the people as “false witnesses” (Acts 6:13). Stephen's speech cannot be treated at length in the present volume, but see Samson Uytanlet, *Luke-Acts and Jewish Historiography: A Study on Theology, Literature, and Ideology of Luke-Acts*, WUNT 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 46-67.

²⁰² On the Christian side, see, e.g. *Dial.* 39, 48, 67, 88, 93, 142; *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* 44.2. On the Jewish side, see Celsus' statement, cited by Origen, that the argument between Jews and Christians consists in whether the Christ who will restore the world is Jesus (*Cels.* 4.1-2; cf. Acts 18:5). The traditions contained in the *Toledot Yeshu*, though centuries later than Luke's writing, provide evidence of exegetical debate over Jesus' status as Christ, together with much legendary and *ad hominem* material. See *The Toledot Yeshu: The Life Story of Jesus: Two Volumes and Database*, ed. and trans. Michael Meerson and Peter Schäfer, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 82-91.

Blessed One" (Mk 14:61; cf. Mt 26:63), Luke expands this question into two distinct queries into Jesus' identity, drawing out the matter in dispute (Lk 22:67, 70). For his part, Jesus offers a twofold criticism of the council's unwillingness to engage in serious dialogue, revealing perhaps Luke's awareness that encounters with non-Christian Jews may not always be genuine discussions. By situating the issue of Jesus' identity at the center of the trial before the Sanhedrin, Luke's narrative foreshadows debates between the church and synagogue of his day.

6.2.2 Trials before Pilate and Herod, Crucifixion

Jesus is sent to Pilate immediately after his morning trial before the Sanhedrin with the charge that he perverts the Jewish nation, calls himself a king, and thus prohibits paying taxes to Caesar (23:2). The reader knows from 20:22-26, as perhaps Jesus' Jewish accusers in the story do as well, that the charge is only partly true. Jesus *has* made a royal claim in not rebuking the royal address of his disciples (19:38), but he hardly intends to affect Roman taxation policy. The title Χριστός thus becomes a pretext for the charge of sedition against Rome. Pilate recognizes this charge to be groundless, and it is only the repeated insistence of Jesus' accusers that he has been stirring up the people with his teaching (ἀνασεΐει τὸν λαὸν διδάσκων) from Galilee to Judea that prompts Pilate to send him to Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee (23:4-5). This charge suggests that one factor exacerbating conflict between non-Christian Jews and early

Christians may have been competition for leadership over the Jewish people. In all likelihood, a majority of the earliest followers of Jesus were Jews, as Luke overtly attests (Acts 2:41, 4:4, 21:20; cf. Jn 12:19).²⁰³ If part of the Jewish charge against the church was that it stole members from the synagogue, this concern may be reflected in Luke's inclusion of the charge that Jesus exerted a disruptive influence on the people.

The statement that Jesus "stirs up the people" may, however, have an additional layer of meaning that resonates with Jewish concerns in Luke's day. In the gospel tradition, the opponents of Jesus fear that Jesus' popularity has created a situation that may result in a riot among the people, particularly if he is opposed publicly (Lk 20:19, 22:2; cf. Mk 14:2; Jn 11:48). By the time of Luke's writing, shortly after the Jewish war with Rome, political instability was not merely a possibility but a fact of recent history. In Acts, Gamaliel draws a connection between the Christian movement and the political revolts under Theudas and Judas the Galilean (Acts 5:36-7), messianic claimants whose revolutionary activities anticipated the war with Rome and whom Josephus therefore

²⁰³ The early success of the Christian movement among Jews has been argued from a historical perspective by Marcel Simon (*Verus Israel*, 65-80) and from a sociological perspective by Rodney Stark (*The Rise of Christianity*, 49-71). First-century Jewish receptivity to the Christian gospel is historically likely despite the fact that early Jewish Christians lament Jewish rejection of the gospel (e.g. Rom 9-11). Jews such as the pre-Christian Paul would hardly have bothered to persecute early Christians if their message had no traction in Jewish communities.

disparages (*Ant.* 17.10.5; 20.5.1-2).²⁰⁴ Since Luke was aware that some Christians, such as Paul, also ran afoul of Roman authorities,²⁰⁵ he may also have been aware of non-Christian Jews who, in the years following the destruction of the temple, felt uneasy with the instability the sect of the Christians continued creating within post-war Jewish communities. The claim that Jesus stirs up the people at Lk 23:5 may thus voice a conviction among some Jews of Luke's day that Christianity is a disruptive cultural force within the Jewish world that attracts more attention from Roman authorities than is helpful. Claudius' expulsion of Jews from Rome in 49 C.E. over what was probably a dispute among Jewish Christians or between Jewish Christians and non-Christian Jews demonstrates that, due to the enmeshed nature of "Judaism" and "Christianity" in the first century, the disruption of Jewish life occasioned by Christian teaching and practice could lead to imperial hostility toward non-Christian Jewish communities.²⁰⁶ With such

²⁰⁴ The historical discrepancies between Gamaliel's speech and Josephus' account need not detain us here. For the possibility that Luke was dependent on Josephus, see Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*, 251-296.

²⁰⁵ This was likely a phenomenon that extended beyond Paul's experience, given the preservation in the Synoptics of predictions that Jesus' disciples would be dragged before gentiles to bear witness (Mt 10:18, cf. Mk 13:9).

²⁰⁶ The expulsion is narrated by Suetonius (*Claud.* 25.4); cf. Acts 18:2. On the likelihood that the expulsion was due to a dispute over Christ in which Jewish Christians were involved, see Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*, trans. Michael Steinhauser, ed. Marshall

dangers Acts is also familiar, as the public beating of Sosthenes the synagogue official before Gallio and the riot against Alexander the Jew in Ephesus attest (Acts 18:2-17; 19:33-40). As Kavin Rowe has argued, it is part of Luke's strategy to show that the Christian disruption of pagan life is a *non-violent* one.²⁰⁷ Making that argument requires, however, proving false the terms of the charge against Christians like Paul. It is no surprise that we find in Luke's presentation of the (false) charges against Jesus an anticipation of the later charges against Christians.

A second element in the charges against Jesus in Luke's gospel suggests their relevance for Luke's relation to non-Christian Jews. In what can be recovered of Jewish anti-Christian literature in antiquity, it is commonly charged that Jesus was a magician. The second century pagan philosopher Celsus, for example, writes derisively of a dispute between Jesus and a Jewish philosopher in which Jesus is characterized as an Egyptian-trained magician who proclaims himself a god through his arrogant display of magic (*Cels.* 1.28). If Luke was aware of such charges, that awareness would help

D. Johnson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 12-13; Raymond E. Brown, *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity*, ed. Raymond E. Brown and John P. Meier (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), 101.

²⁰⁷ See Kavin Rowe, *World Upside Down*, 53-89; cf. Rowe, *One True Life: The Stoics and Early Christians as Rival Traditions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 138-39.

explain the peculiar role Herod plays in his gospel. While at Lk 13:31 the Pharisees warn Jesus that Herod wants to kill him, elsewhere Luke portrays Herod as simply wanting to *see* Jesus (ἐζήτει ἰδεῖν αὐτόν, 9:9). This desire to see Jesus appears to be rooted in curiosity, since when Herod finally does see Jesus he is glad, “for he had been hoping to see him (θέλων ἰδεῖν αὐτόν), having heard about him” (23:8). Herod’s hearing about “everything that happened” with regard to Jesus (τὰ γινόμενα πάντα, 9:7) probably refers specifically to the report that had spread to every region as a result of Jesus’ miraculous deeds (4:37). Herod marvels over “such things” (τοιαῦτα), asking “Who is this?” (9:9). This statement of Herod’s perplexity and the repetition of his desire to see Jesus anticipates his hope that he will see Jesus perform some sign at the trial (ἤλπιζέν τι σημεῖον ἰδεῖν ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ γινόμενον, 23:8). Herod thus seeks a display of Jesus’ powers—the same sort of display that Celsus alleges Jesus was eager to provide. But Jesus disappoints Herod by providing neither sign nor answer, and Herod must content himself with mockery before sending him back to Pilate. If the charge against Jesus’ magical grandstanding from non-Christian Jews is as early as the late first century, the disappointing non-performance before Herod may be Luke’s attempt to show that charge to be false. If so, his trial scene may be directed toward persuading non-Christian Jews to reject the caricature of Jesus as a magician.

A third element in the charges against Jesus further supports the interpretation of his trial as Luke’s attempted correction of non-Christian Jewish accounts of Jesus’

crimes. In the final trial scene Pilate states the charge against Jesus: “You brought me this man as one who corrupts the people” (ὡς ἀποστρέφοντα τὸν λαόν, 23:14). This statement recalls the charge, made to Pilate at 23:2, that Jesus perverts the nation (διαστρέφοντα τὸ ἔθνος). Elsewhere in the gospel tradition the language of “deception” (πλάνος/πλανᾶω) occurs as a charge on the lips of Jesus’ opponents (Mt 27:63; Jn 7:12, 47). By contrast, the language of corrupting/perverting the people (using the verbal root στρέφω for “turning”) is distinctive to Luke. This language recalls the actions of false prophets who “speak falsehood against YHWH your God, to lead you astray” (כִּי דַבְּרִי-סָרָה עַל-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם ... לְהַדְיִחְךָ) through divination or the worship of other gods and whom therefore Israel is commanded to stone to death (Deut 13:5, 10). The verbal root נָדַח (“to push”) has a wide range of meanings, all of which depend upon the underlying sense of a physical induction to movement. Luke’s terminology, which has Jesus being charged with “turning the people,” employs a similar metaphor, and the language of “corruption” (ἀποστρέφω) is similar to that of “apostasy” (ἀποστῆσαι), which translates the hiphil form of נָדַח in Deut 13:10 LXX. It is thus reasonable to think that Luke’s version of the charge against Jesus uses language that presents Jesus as a false prophet who deserves death. From where would Luke, who alone among the evangelists uses such language, have derived this version of the charge?

One of the few passages in rabbinic literature that mention Jesus includes an account of his trial and death as a false prophet, and the formal charge stated is that he

“practiced sorcery and incited and turned Israel away” (על שכישף והסית והדיח את ישראל) (*b. Sanh* 43a). In addition to the application of Deuteronomy’s language to Jesus in the statement that he led Israel astray (והדיח את ישראל), the charge that Jesus “incited Israel” (והסית ... את ישראל) is closely parallel to the claim of the council in Lk 23:5 that Jesus “stirs up the people.” The verb סות is translated several times in the Greek Bible with ἐπισειώ, a verb virtually identical with ἀνασειεί, used by Luke at 23:5 (see 1Sam 26:19, 2Sam 24:1, 1Chr 21:1). This short statement from the Talmud is thus strikingly parallel to the form of the charge against Jesus in Luke. It is unlikely that the rabbinic sages read, marked, or inwardly digested the Greek text of Luke’s gospel or were concerned to preserve the Jewish charges against Jesus learned from Christian sources. It is, however, entirely likely that this tradition in the Talmud is of some antiquity, particularly as the Talmud’s presentation of the Jewish charge of sorcery is corroborated by both Celsus and Justin as early as the second century (Origen, *Cels.* 1.28; *Dial.* 69).²⁰⁸ We cannot prove that this tradition is as old as the late first century, that it was known in some form by Luke, or that it served as a source for his unique presentation of the charges against Jesus. But the possibility cannot be excluded simply on the grounds of judicious scholarly hesitation to give an early date to the traditions of the rabbis. Since, in fact, we have reason to believe that Luke lived in proximity to and was influenced by non-Christian

²⁰⁸ The charge may go back to the Beelzebub controversy (cf. Mk 3:22-27).

Jews, we are warranted in supposing that he has drawn the substance of his charge from the same source as did, eventually, the rabbinic sages. This proposal not only strengthens the likelihood that Luke lived in close connection with non-Christian Jews. It also suggests Luke's willingness to present the Jewish charges against Jesus in terms that contemporary Jews would recognize, charges which Luke's narrative shows to be understandable but false.²⁰⁹

Luke makes it clear that Pilate wished to release Jesus, having him declare Jesus' innocence no fewer than three times (23:4, 14-15, 22). He likewise intensifies the vigor with which Jesus' Jewish opponents cry for his death. Whereas in Mark and Matthew the crowd requires the instigation of the chief priests in order to ask for Barabbas to be released instead of Jesus (Mk 15:11; Mt 27:20), in Luke, the gathered assembly, which includes the people along with the chief priests and leaders, spontaneously demands Barabbas's release and Jesus' crucifixion (23:13, 18-20). The demand for Jesus' death in Luke, as in John, is doubled into a riotous chant: "Crucify, crucify him!" (23:21; cf. Jn 19:6). The doubling of the imperative *σταύρου* may be read as a contraction of the imperatives in two separate cries of Mk 15:13-14, but this editorial change paints the

²⁰⁹ The charge of stirring up the people is understandable in light of the "great multitude of the people" from all Israel who assemble to hear Jesus teach (Lk 6:17, 14:25, 23:27), yet the reader learns that Jesus is not starting a rebellion. The language of "turning" the people is, in fact, what Jesus will attempt to do through the apostles (Acts 3:19, 26).

scene in vivid colors: “They were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified, and their voices prevailed” (23:23). When Pilate grants their request, Luke draws attention to the irony of the exchange: “He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, whom they asked for, but Jesus he delivered up to their will” (23:25). The parallels at Mk 15:15 and Mt 27:26 are briefer and less dramatic, and the Lukan scene thus stands out as a dark portrait of murder. From a literary perspective, the macabre scene brings to a culmination the pathos with which Luke has draped the long travel narrative, and it provides the warrant for the “vengeance” and “wrath” that will come upon Jerusalem at its destruction (21:22-23).²¹⁰ The inescapable implication of such a scene is that the culpability for Jesus’ death extends to the Jewish λαός as a whole, for, as Lohfink has shown, the people are symbolically present with Jesus in Jerusalem.²¹¹

²¹⁰ The destruction is not simply due to the death of Jesus but is vengeance for “the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world” (Lk 11:50). Jesus stands out among these as supreme (cf. Acts 3:22-24), but he does not stand alone.

²¹¹ Jon Weatherly has argued that for Luke the responsibility for Jesus’ death is limited to the Jerusalem Jews and does not extend to the people as such (Jon A. Weatherly, *Jewish Responsibility for the Death of Jesus in Luke-Acts*, LNTS [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995]). However, as Peter’s Pentecost speech makes clear, it is not Jerusalemites only that Peter charges as culpable for Jesus death but Jews from “every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5). Luke’s view of the people is that they must “gather with” Jesus (cf. Lk 11:23) by actively disavowing the earlier rejection of Jesus in Jerusalem.

The people's guilt in Jesus' death is heightened through Luke's reworking of the Markan trial scenes. Luke lacks the scene of Roman soldiers abusing Jesus and mocking him with a crown of thorns, a scene that in the other three gospels intervenes between Pilate's sentence and Jesus' actual crucifixion. The scene has been condensed and appended to the trial before Herod in Lk 23:11,²¹² an editorial move that has prompted one of the most striking misunderstandings of the Lukan passion narrative. At Lk 23:25 Luke writes, following Mk 15:15, that "Pilate delivered Jesus over to their will." In the absence of an intervening narrative, what follows in Luke is the simple statement, as in the other synoptic gospels, "They led him away" (23:26). The unexpressed subject of the verb ἀπήγαγον should, strictly speaking, be the actors of the previous scene: *the chief priests and rulers and the people* whom Pilate gathered at 23:13. For this reason Gaston has argued that in Luke it is *the Jews* who crucify Jesus, not the Romans.²¹³

In terms of the literary movement of the passage, Gaston's interpretation is valid. Because there is no intervening scene explicitly introducing the Roman soldiers as the agents of the crucifixion between the verdict of Pilate and the crucifixion, the order of events in Luke's passion narrative creates a direct connection between the calls for Jesus'

²¹² So, Carroll, *Luke*, 462.

²¹³ Gaston, "Anti-Judaism," 149-50. Bovon, who wishes to "respect the haziness that comes from the absence of an explicit subject," sees in the absence of the scourging by Roman soldiers a desire to exonerate Pilate (*Luke* 3, 299; cf. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1496).

crucifixion by the Jewish people and leaders and the fulfillment of that request: “They were insistent with loud voices, requesting that he be crucified, and their voices prevailed...and [Pilate] handed Jesus over to their will...They led him away...They crucified him” (23:23-33). However, several observations urge against the conclusion that this distant subject was intended by Luke to govern these verbs.

1) Firstly, the impression that the Jews alone crucify Jesus derives from Luke’s alleged creation of a link between two *distant* features of his Markan source text that were originally unassociated—the Jewish crowds present at the trial before Pilate (Mk 15:1) and the verb at Mk 15:20. Luke’s creation of this distant link may have been *inadvertent*, for Luke does not express an overt linkage between these elements (i.e. the subject remains unstated at Lk 23:26 as at Mk 15:20). As Luke’s motive for *removing* the scene with the soldiers from its Markan context seems to have been related to its *insertion* into the scene of the trial before Herod (so 23:11), it seems less likely that it was Luke’s intention to create a subtle, distant association across 13 verses. There are easier ways to say it was the Jews who crucified Jesus.

2) Luke’s writings contain numerous statements that Jesus will not simply be put to death but will be “delivered over” to people who will put him to death. Jesus predicts that he will be “handed over” to human hands (μέλλει παραδίδοσθαι, 9:44), and the angelic men at the tomb remind the women of this necessity (δεῖ παραδοθῆναι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἀμαρτωλῶν καὶ σταυρωθῆναι, 24:7). The Jewish leaders are

primarily the *agents* not the recipients of this act of deliverance. At 18:32 this deliverance is specifically made “to the gentiles” (παραδοθήσεται γὰρ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). The opposite statement, that the gentiles deliver Jesus to Jewish persons, is not made, though the statement that Pilate “delivered Jesus to their *will*” (παρέδωκεν τῷ θελήματι αὐτῶν) at 23:25 certainly implicates the leaders and people in Jesus’ death. Nevertheless, they do not appear to be his executioners. At 20:20 their conspiracy against Jesus is made in hopes of delivering him “to the ruler and power of the governor” (ὥστε παραδοῦναι αὐτὸν τῇ ἀρχῇ καὶ τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος). The disciples on the road to Emmaus lament the Jerusalem leadership’s role in conveying Jesus “into the judgment of death” (παρέδωκαν αὐτὸν ...εἰς κρίμα θανάτου, 24:20)—that is, by their insistence that Pilate put him to death (23:31).

Some passages from Acts are also relevant. In Acts 2:23 Peter claims that through God’s providence and foreknowledge Jesus was delivered to death “by the hands of lawless men” (ἔκδοτον διὰ χειρὸς ἀνόμων προσπήξαντες ἀνείλατε; cf. Lk 24:7). While ἀνόμων indicates the unjust nature of Jesus’ trial, it likely refers to gentiles, who are without the law (cf. Rom 2:12; 1Cor 9:21). In Acts 3:13 Peter states that the Jews “delivered over and rejected” Jesus “before the face of Pilate” (παρεδώκατε καὶ ἠρνήσασθε κατὰ πρόσωπον Πιλάτου). Finally, the Paul of Acts states that the residents of Jerusalem and their leaders “asked Pilate to have him killed,” indicating again the source of the authority for the crucifixion (Acts 13:38). Each of these

summaries of the death of Jesus includes the language of Jesus being handed over from one person to another, and in almost every instance it is the Jews who hand Jesus over into different hands.

3) In Acts 4:23-31 the gathered disciples pray for strength to face persecution, reflecting on the words of Ps 2:1-2:

Why do gentiles (ἔθνη) rage

and peoples (λαοί) contemplate vanity?

The kings of the earth have taken a stand,

and the rulers have gathered together (συνήχθησαν) against the Lord

and against his anointed. (Acts 4:25-26 // Ps 2:1-2)

Following the citation, a direct and precise application is given: "Truly there were gathered together (συνήχθησαν) in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the gentiles (ἔθνεσιν) and the *peoples* of Israel (λαοὶς Ἰσραήλ)" (4:27). By teasing out the four actors described in the psalm and distributing the responsibility for the death of Jesus among Herod, Pilate, the gentiles (broadly conceived), and "the peoples of Israel," Luke shows a willingness to

ascribe an active role in Jesus' death to Pilate as well as to other gentiles, i.e. the Romans.²¹⁴

4) Luke retains the Markan tradition of the Roman centurion's presence at Jesus' death (23:47). The presence of this particularly Roman officer should cause us to understand the "soldiers" who mock Jesus on the cross (στρατιῶται, 23:36) as Roman soldiers under the centurion's oversight, in contrast to the officers (στρατηγοί) of the temple, who disappear from Luke's narrative once Jesus is delivered to the council (22:52). Only the contrary assumption that these differently termed officers are identical permits the view that Jesus was crucified by the Jewish temple police, but this

²¹⁴ Haenchen also reads the ἔθνη as the Roman soldiers (*Acts*, 227). Without this conclusion, it is difficult to understand what gentiles Luke might be referring to, since Pilate has already been accounted for. Tyson appears to recognize the importance of Ps 2:1-2 for structuring Luke's account of the responsibility for the death of Jesus in Acts 4:24-30, but he judges Luke to have exculpated all the agents involved except the Jews (*Death of Jesus*, 139). Luke's awkward reference to the "peoples of Israel" in Acts 4:27 is due to the presence of the plural form in Ps 2:1, where the reference was probably originally to gentiles (Hebrew: גוים; Greek: λαοί). For Luke, however, λαός nearly always refers to Israel, and its use in parallel with ἔθνη in the psalm provides the elements necessary to explicate the shared responsibility of Jews and gentiles for Jesus' death.

assumption is not viable.²¹⁵ It is not the Jews who physically kill Jesus in Luke but Romans soldiers under Pilate's direction.

Thus, despite the grammatical ambiguities of Lk 23:26-33, the assertion that Jesus was physically crucified by the Jews according to Luke is unconvincing. Rather, Luke's narrative, as a whole, presses against this conclusion. In concert with the rest of the gospel tradition, Luke thinks Jesus died at the hands of Romans soldiers. Nevertheless, Luke focuses on the role of the leaders of the Jews and the people in a manner that merits careful attention.

In view of the complexity of Luke's passion narrative and Luke's frequent use of transfer language to implicate the multiple groups involved in Jesus' death, it is necessary to distinguish between agency and responsibility. As we have observed, the chief action of the Jewish leaders involves *handing Jesus over* to the Roman leadership (18:32, 20:20, 24:20), who are the active agents in his crucifixion. As the *accomplices* to Jesus' death on a Roman cross, the Jewish people, under the Jerusalem leadership, share with the Romans the responsibility for his death (so Acts 4:25-28). It is in this sense that Peter's proclamation of "Jesus, whom *you crucified*" should be understood (Acts 2:36; cf. 2:23, 4:10). The responsibility for the action rests upon conspirators and accomplices as much as upon those who physically carried out Jesus' death.

²¹⁵ Sanders is confident that the soldiers who crucify Jesus are "Jewish military personnel," though he admits that "Luke does not actually say that they are" (*The Jews in Luke-Acts*, 227-8).

Though the people have displayed a positive attitude toward Jesus during his ministry (7:16, 18:43) and in the Jerusalem temple prior to his arrest (19:48, 20:19, 26, 21:38), the negative turn against him as he stands before Pilate appears to follow the pattern of acceptance followed by rejection, which was anticipated in the double response to Jesus in the programmatic Nazareth scene at Lk 4:22-30. In view of this connection and of the basic structure of Acts, which moves from a period of successful mission among the Jewish people in Jerusalem to the less successful (but by no means fruitless) mission of Paul among Jews, it is appropriate to reckon with this image of rejection and to ask whether it is, in fact, the dominant of the two, as it is often regarded in Lukan scholarship.²¹⁶ I have argued throughout this work that such questions should be deferred until the narrative can be assessed in its entirety. That point is fast approaching, but it has not yet arrived. For while the passion narrative is indeed the moment of crisis toward which the whole of Luke's gospel has been leading, it is not yet the end of Luke's story or of his portrayal of the people.

²¹⁶ For Tyson, the impression to be drawn from the structure of Luke's narration is that the negative image of rejection is final and therefore dominant, undermining the significance of the positive images that precede it (*Images of Judaism*, 188); cf. Sanders, *Jews in Luke-Acts*, 81.

6.3 *Repentance and Restraint*

It would not have been difficult for Luke to signal that the condemnation of Jesus by the people was due to their characteristic wickedness.²¹⁷ Instead, he follows the portrayal of Jewish responsibility for the violent condemnation of Jesus with a series of countermanding scenes. When Jesus is led away to his crucifixion, he is accompanied by “a great number of the people (πολὸν πλῆθος τοῦ λαοῦ)” and women who bewail his fate (23:37). Notwithstanding Jesus’ ominous statement that these women should bewail the fate of their own families, upon whom darker days are sure to fall, the scene displays a sympathetic relation between the women, who beat their breasts and wail, and Jesus who, addresses them as the “daughters of Jerusalem” (23:27-28).²¹⁸ While it is true that only the women and not the whole people explicitly mourn before Jesus’ death, afterwards the entire crowd gathered to observe the spectacle (πάντες οἱ συμπαραγενόμενοι ὄχλοι ἐπὶ τὴν θεωρίαν ταύτην) returns home in sadness, beating their breasts in solidarity with the women’s laments (23:48) and, it seems, with the centurion’s statement, placed immediately prior that “this man” was surely innocent

²¹⁷ The *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, for example, flatly characterizes Jews as eager and habitual accomplices in the murder of the saints (Mart. Pol. 13.1; cf. 17.2, 18.1).

²¹⁸ This sympathy is present despite Neyrey’s observation that the scene laments God’s wrath against the people (“Jesus’ Address to the Women of Jerusalem,” 76-69).

(23:47).²¹⁹ As with the condemnation before Pilate, in which Luke dramatizes the irony of the exchange of Jesus for the insurrectionist and murderer Barabbas (23:24), these pathos-filled scenes dramatize the irony of the death of the innocent Jesus. But while the people appear blind to this irony as they stand before Pilate, in the later scenes they recognize the crucifixion as a tragedy of injustice, beating their breasts in sorrow (23:48). In view of the people's active role in calling for Jesus' crucifixion (23:21), the statement that the people mourned Jesus' death should be understood as indication of their contrition.²²⁰

The image of a saddened populace who realize the injustice of Jesus' death anticipates the reaction of the "devout Jews from every nation" who, when faced with the charge of their complicity in Jesus' death by Peter's speech (Acts 2:36), are "cut to the heart" and exclaim "brothers, what should we do?" (2:37). The answer, "repent and be baptized" is readily accepted by about three thousand of these Jews (2:41), and this repentance, like the "Jerusalem springtime" of which it is a central feature, shows how misleading is Sanders' claim that for Luke the Jews "get one chance at salvation, which they will of course reject, bringing God's wrath down on them."²²¹ On the contrary,

²¹⁹ For the reader, the confession of innocence by the centurion in 24:47 may be included in τὰ γενόμενα, which the crowds are said in 24:48 to have observed.

²²⁰ In 18:13, the tax collector's beating of his breast is an act of humble contrition.

²²¹ *Jews in Luke-Acts*, 63.

Luke's narration of the Jewish engagement with Jesus extends beyond their denunciation of him at his trial, and in this way it is like his narration of the story of the disciples, who either abandon or deny him at the time of his trial but who are subsequently restored after a stern rebuke. Peter's call for repentance and baptism in Acts 2:38, following his own repentance and recovered faith in Lk 22:32, is thus a fitting symbol for Luke's schematization of Jewish and Christian identities. Both groups—Israel and the church—are shown to have failed to respond rightly to Jesus during his lifetime. Subsequent to his resurrection both are called to repentance and restoration, “times of refreshing” in expectation of the final salvation (Acts 3:20).

This parallel between the fate of the Jews and the fate of the church after Jesus' resurrection is demonstrated in the figure of Joseph of Arimathea, who stands as a bridge between the two groups. In keeping with the gospel tradition, Luke identifies Joseph as a member of the council that condemned Jesus but who himself did not consent to their decision (Lk 23:51; cf. Acts 13:29). Following Mk 15:43, Luke writes that Joseph was “waiting for the kingdom of God,” adding that he was a “good and righteous man” and that he came “from Arimathea, a city of the Jews” (ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας πόλεως τῶν Ἰουδαίων, 23:50-51). This increased emphasis upon Joseph's Jewish heritage is matched by an absence of any statement that he was one of Jesus' disciples, though his burial of Jesus demonstrates a kindness that elsewhere in the gospel tradition earns him the status of a disciple (Mt 27:57; Jn 19:38). In Luke, however,

he stands simply as a sympathetic Jewish leader who, though closely associated with the council that condemned Jesus, nevertheless demonstrates through an act of charity his virtue and his awareness of the error of the other leaders. If Luke's desire were to denigrate the Jewish leadership *in toto*, the portrayal of Joseph would hardly be suitable.

The portrait of Joseph as a Jewish councilman who shows kindness to Jesus anticipates the similar portrayal of Gamaliel in Acts 5:33-39. Though not identified as a disciple of Jesus, Gamaliel is introduced with a brief summary of his widespread respectability as teacher of the law, a characterization that for Luke is wholly positive (5:34).²²² Gamaliel demonstrates both his fair-minded civility and his piety when he urges the council to leave the apostles alone, trusting that if their movement is of human origin it will fail, "but if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them; in that case you may even be found fighting against God" (5:39). Gamaliel's wise speculation is only that; he does not affirm the divine origin of the apostles' teaching but simply recognizes the practical and religious merits of not opposing it. By making space for the apostles, as Joseph made space for Jesus, he represents a striking counterpoint to a

²²² Compare the description of Zachariah and Elizabeth (Lk 1:6). There are no named Jewish enemies in Luke-Acts besides Herod, but there are, in the persons of Joseph and Gamaliel, two named dissidents to the Sanhedrin's opposition to Jesus and the church.

stereotype of consistent Jewish hostility that sometimes animated early Christian imagination.²²³

Why would an early Christian writer whose story of Christian origins involves so much opposition to Jesus and his apostles from Jewish leaders include two named exceptions to this tendency? If Luke's intention had been to denigrate the Jewish people or their leaders *en bloc* in order to show the superior piety of Christian leadership to a gentile audience, he should hardly have included two narrative vignettes that showed members of the council that condemned Jesus as sensitive and fair-minded dissidents. On the other hand, if Luke's narrative was written to influence Jews, both those who believed in Jesus and those who did not, these leaders may have served as narrative exemplars for relating sympathetically to the sect of Christianity from within structures of Jewish power. By showing that two virtuous Jewish leaders, with strong support among the people, were sympathetic toward the movement, Luke may have hoped to induce a similar disposition among those who, like the Roman Jews Paul encounters, had heard that "this sect is everywhere maligned" and yet were inclined to give Paul's gospel a fair hearing (Acts 28:21-22). The statement in Acts 6:7 that "a great many of the

²²³ The Lukan portrait of Gamaliel is thus a counterpoint to Paul's bald statement in 1Thess 2:14-16, that "the Jews...are displeasing God and oppose all people, hindering us from speaking to the gentiles...always filling up the measure of their sins." In the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions*, Gamaliel is identified as a secret Christian within the council (*Rec.* 1.65-67).

priests became obedient to the faith” may have been written with the same hope of demonstrating Jewish openness to the gospel.

Luke’s hopes for a hearing from a Jewish readership is connected with his special attention to Jerusalem. In Chapter 2 we observed his attention to Jerusalem and its temple as an aspect of his concern with God’s fidelity to Israel. Chapter 5 presented an explanation of the Lukan travel narrative as Jesus’ pilgrimage toward his climactic encounter with the people of Israel in Jerusalem. The crisis of that encounter, in which the Jewish leadership and the Jewish people reject God’s Christ (cf. Acts 2:36), is sometimes interpreted as having a corresponding *result*—that God not only abandons Jerusalem to destruction by the Romans but also abandons Israel as the people of God.²²⁴ In view of the debate over this question, we must briefly consider Luke’s shaping of the geographical material in his resurrection narrative. As we shall observe, the final chapter of the gospel maintains Luke’s focus upon and concern for Jerusalem and its temple.

²²⁴ For the history of this influential interpretation in modern scholarship, which also has a long pre-modern history, see Joseph B. Tyson, *Luke, Judaism, and the Scholars: Critical Approaches to Luke-Acts* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999).

6.4 Resurrection

In the scene of the empty tomb, Luke follows closely Mark's account of the angelic appearance to the women, who arrive early on the morning after the Sabbath with spices to find the stone rolled away and receive word that Jesus has risen (Lk 24:1-5; Mk 16:1-6). But where the Markan women are told, "Go, tell his disciples and Peter that *he is going ahead of you to Galilee*; there you will see him, just as he told you" (Mk 15:7), the women in Luke hear a carefully adjusted proclamation: "Remember how he told you, *while he was still in Galilee*, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again" (Lk 24:6-7). In both gospels the women are reminded of Jesus' earlier prediction of his passion and resurrection (Lk 18:32-33; cf. Mk 9:31), but Luke has adjusted the reference to Galilee to refer to a historical moment in Jesus' ministry, removing entirely the tradition contained in Mark, Matthew, and John of an appearance to the apostles there.

Far from accidental, this adjustment is accompanied by the command of the risen Jesus that the apostles not leave Jerusalem: "As for you, remain in the city (καθίστατε ἐν τῇ πόλει) until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Lk 24:49). The command is repeated in stronger language at the beginning of Luke's second volume: "He commanded them not to separate from Jerusalem (ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων μὴ χωρίζεσθαι) but instead to await the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4). However this account of Jesus' resurrection appearance in Jerusalem and his ascension east of the city

in Bethany of Judea should be related to the tradition of the appearance and ascension in Galilee (Mt 28:16-20; cf. Mk 16:7), the fact remains that Luke was aware of the tradition of a resurrection appearance in Galilee from Mk 16:7 and yet chose Jerusalem as the setting for the end of his gospel. Such a choice is particularly striking in view of the historical fact that, by Luke's time, strains of gentile Christianity under the influence of Paul and his followers had developed outside the ambit of Jerusalem and its Jewish Christian constituencies. As Luke's narrative of the gentile mission reveals, such strains had prominent centers in Samaria and, especially, Antioch. For such groups, a narrative of a climactic revelation to and commission of the apostles *outside* of Judea could have had the effect of galvanizing gentile Christianity against assertions of the authority of persons or practices emanating from Judea (cf. Gal 2:11-14; Acts 15:1-5). It appears, however, that Luke's story of Christian origins is firmly rooted in the non-separation of the apostles from Jerusalem. Jerusalem remains a center for the expansion throughout Acts, including the ministry of Paul, whose fidelity to the city is expressed through his repeated presence there (Acts 9:26, 12:25, 13:13, 15:2-4, 18:22, 21:17). In light of the centrality of the city throughout Luke's two-volume work, Jesus' command that the apostles not withdraw from Jerusalem has a symbolic as well as a literal sense. It is no accident, then, that the apostolic ministry of proclaiming repentance to all nations issues forth from Jerusalem (ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλήμ, Lk 24:47).

Luke's gospel ends, where it began, with a scene of worship in the temple. The announcement to Zechariah of John's birth, which led through the old man's disbelief to his inspired exultation, has given way to another scene in which God is blessed by those initially rebuked for their disbelief (cf. Lk 24:25-26, 38): "They returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were continually blessing God in the temple" (24:53). Whatever else Luke may have to say about the temple—its inherent limitations (c.f. Acts 7:47-50) and its coming destruction (c.f. Lk 21:6)—it remains the gravitational center around which Luke's characters perpetually orbit (and toward which the Jews in Rome appear to look for guidance; cf. Acts 28:21). Jesus' life is framed by his participation in the temple. Already in his infancy he participates in its rites, and in his boyhood he sits among its sages as one thoroughly at home "in my Father's matters." At the end of his life his arrest is preceded by a dynamic entry into the temple and an extended period of public teaching there while the gathered people of Israel stand in awe (19:48, 20:1, 19, 21:38). The presence of the disciples in the temple at the end of the gospel is thus an expression of a thoroughly Lukan conviction that the gospel story, like the gospel message it preaches, has feet on the ground in the epicenter of Israelite religion.

This element in Lukan thought is sometimes forgotten as Acts is construed as a narrative that moves outward from Jerusalem and Judea through Samaria "to the ends

of the earth" (Acts 1:8).²²⁵ Though this statement is an important indication of the horizon of the ensuing global mission, it does not provide a precise itinerary for the narrative of Acts but rather a sketch of the apostolic missionary vision as it includes the mission the gentiles. Despite their knowledge of an ongoing mission among the gentiles, the Twelve, in Luke's telling at least, do not take up Paul's missionary practice but remain in the Jerusalem even when the rest of the church is forced to flee through persecution (Acts 8:1). Only *after* Samaria has been converted do Peter and John venture into gentile territory, after which they return to Jerusalem (8:14-25). The Lukan Paul, unlike the Paul of Romans, does not long to preach the gospel to the church in Rome (cf. Rom 1:13-15) but ends up in Rome as a result of his appeal to Caesar, who, though the ruler of the entire world, is such an *unimportant* character in this story that neither he nor anyone from the imperial household appears in Luke's long narrative (despite the historical warrant evident in Phil 1:13; 4:22). The Lukan Paul likewise does not envision going to Spain (contrast Rom 15:28) but longs instead to celebrate Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 20:16), his true spiritual home (cf. Acts 22:3, 26:4), where he hastens to share in the temple worship (Acts 21:24, 26).

The presence of the disciples in the temple at the end of Luke's gospel likewise anticipates a series of Jerusalem scenes in Acts 1-3. After Jesus' ascension, the apostles

²²⁵ So Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, 74; Adolf von Harnack, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908), 275; Haenchen, *Acts*, 144. Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts*, 24.

return to the upper room in Jerusalem where they held their last meal with Jesus (Acts 1:13; cf. Lk 22:12). There Matthias is chosen by the Holy Spirit to replace Judas, so that the symbolic number of twelve apostles may be maintained (1:15-26). On the day of Pentecost, the outpouring of the Spirit and Peter's speech in Jerusalem both occur in the presence of "men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem," (ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες Ἱερουσαλὴμ πάντες, 2:14). Those "who dwell in Jerusalem" are the devout Jews from the entire Diaspora (Ἰουδαῖοι, ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἔθνους, Acts 2:5), whose explicitly noted presence reinforces Lohfink's conclusion that God has gathered Israel together for an encounter with Jesus and his commissioned representatives (cf. Lk 24:48; Acts 1:8, 2:32, 4:10).²²⁶ It is in the midst of this symbolically gathered Jewish body that Peter's two long speeches are delivered (2:14-36 and 3:12-36). The latter of these occurs in the temple at Solomon's portico in the presence of "all the people" (πᾶς ὁ λαὸς, 3:11), whom Peter addresses as "Israelites" as he proclaims the recent work of the "God of our ancestors" in Jesus (3:12-13). That work is intended "to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways" (3:26). This purpose of blessing cannot, as Sanders supposes, be understood as a failed attempt at the conversion of these Jews, for the "many" of those who believe Peter's words number around five thousand men (4:4). The success of the apostles among the Jews in

²²⁶ See Lohfink, *Sammlung*, 63-84.

Jerusalem is further indicated by the statement in 2:46-47 that those who believed the apostles' message were continually present in the temple, "praising God and having the favor of all the people (ἔχοντες χάριν πρὸς ὅλον τὸν λαόν)." The result of the earliest apostolic preaching is thus an astounding *success* among the Jews of Jerusalem, and there is here no hint that the temple is anything other than the natural place for such a body to gather.

Luke is clear, to be sure, that not all those in Jerusalem receive the apostles' message. There are "others" who claim that the apostles are drunk (2:13), and the statement that "many who heard the word believed" implies that some did not (4:4). Luke thus portrays Jerusalem, under the influence of the apostles, as a city with a mixed Jewish Christian and non-Christian Jewish population. The boundary between these groups is difficult to ascertain, in part because of Luke's frequent assertion of the positive relation between the two: "They had the favor of the all the people" (2:47); "they were esteemed by the people" (5:13); the authorities could hardly punish the apostles "on account of the people, for they all praised God for what had happened" (4:21). "The people" in these statements cannot be synonymous with the early church but must refer, in each context, to the broader Jewish populace. If this is the shape of Luke's portrait in these chapters, what might we infer about his purposes in writing this way?

These portraits are highly idealized, and they cannot be pressed to account for all the data in Luke's narrative. There is also the continued opposition of the authorities, the

derision of those who reject the message, and the “great persecution” that arises following the killing of Stephen (8:1). The combination of a widespread acceptance of the apostles’ message with a widespread opposition to it is given theological explication in Peter’s explanation of Jesus as the Prophet like Moses predicted in Deut 18:15 (Acts 3:22; cf. Lev 23:29). The statement there that “everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people (ἐξολεθρευθήσεται ἐκ τοῦ λαοῦ)” expresses Luke’s most dire articulation of the theological fate of non-Christian Judaism. Unlike later claims in the *adversus Judaeos* tradition, however, this is not a statement about God’s disinheritance of Israel but about the removal of some within Israel from Israel’s inheritance. The people and their election will endure, but only through repentance, through which those who believe will save themselves “from this crooked generation” (σώθητε ἀπὸ τῆς γενεᾶς τῆς σκολιᾶς ταύτης, Acts 2:40). In these phrases, which are mirror images of one another conceptually, Luke’s apostolic kerygma indicates an inchoate division between the believing and unbelieving portion of Israel.

However, the language of these statements does not appear oriented toward effecting the division it articulates. The form of ἐξολεθρευθήσεται suggests that the removal from Israel of those who reject the Prophet awaits a future judgment of God, one that has yet to be actualized in Luke’s narrative. Likewise, the command “save yourselves from this crooked generation” envisions a future judgment, which Peter hopes his Jewish contemporaries will avoid. The division Luke sketches thus takes

shape under the shadow of an unrealized eschatological future. That future and its judgment, at which the righteous and the unrighteous will be divided (cf. Acts 17:31, 24:15), has some preliminary social expression in Luke's writing—for example, in the distinctive social cohesion of the Christian community in Acts. But an important feature of Luke's portrayal of early Jewish/Christian relations is that the deep theological difference that the apostolic preaching articulates (Acts 2:40, 3:23), following Jesus' teaching (Lk 11:23, 12:49, 51), is not enacted through the immediate or total reorganization of social relations among Jewish Christians and non-Christian Jews. Instead, Luke presents relations between early Christians and the non-Christian Jewish populace in Jerusalem in a mostly positive light (cf. Acts 2:47).

There is a long tradition in Lukan scholarship of explaining this portrayal as expressing Luke's desire to show that Christianity had a Jewish origin, so that gentile Christians worried about a faith that had lost its connection to a living Judaism might be assured of a historical continuity with Israel. I must admit that, if this *had* been the concern of the author, the text as we have it could have functioned in this way. But we have no a priori reason to assume such a setting or purpose. The early chapters of Acts are devoid of any mention of gentiles, and they idealize the relationship between early Jewish Christians and the Jewish people as a whole. If, as I propose, Luke had social contact with non-Christian Jews and Jewish Christians, the narration of a story in which those groups lived in harmonious relationships could function as a means of

encouraging such relations by showing that the possibility of harmonious existence had historical precedent. While not denying the division created by Jesus within Israel, a text like Luke's gospel, particularly when read in light of its continuation in the story of the early chapters of Acts, could show that the crisis within Israel that Jesus effected did not have to issue in hostile social relations between Christian and non-Christian Jews. Likewise, these scenes demonstrate a conviction that at least some non-Christian Jews—Joseph of Arimathea, Gamaliel, and the people of Jerusalem who hold the apostles in high regard—could remain outside the faith while not opposing it. These non-Christian Jews confirm the words of the Lukan Jesus, "Whoever is not against you is for you" (Lk 9:50).

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has surveyed Luke's presentation of the Jewish people in the scenes of Jesus' teaching, trial, and passion in Jerusalem, his resurrection appearances, and the early scenes of the apostles' ministry in Acts. The foray into the early chapters of Acts has been necessary to examine what Luke understands to be the implications for the Jewish people of the rejection of Jesus in Jerusalem. A fully satisfying treatment of this question requires a deeper engagement with Acts than has been possible in the present work. Nevertheless, we have observed an integrity between what is explicated in Acts and the closing scenes of Luke's gospel: the people are poised for repentance, and

several prominent members of the Jewish council are kindly disposed toward the Christian movement. Under Jesus' direction, the apostles likewise maintain a joyful presence in the temple, which becomes a site for healing, proclamation, and communal life. This picture substantially undermines the claim that Luke understood the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish leaders to have resulted in corollary rejection of the Jewish people by God. Rather, it seems that Luke thinks "the people" have been largely responsive to the apostolic message and that even those who have not remain for the present "children of the prophets and the covenant" (Acts 3:25), who may yet either believe Luke's message or else live peaceably with those who do.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The Preceding Argument

This survey of Luke's presentation of nascent Jewish and Christian identities has yielded the following conclusions. Chapter 2 observed how, in the early chapters of his gospel, Luke introduces key themes that will dominate his narrative: God's fidelity to Israel, the crisis of Israel's division brought about through Jesus, the hope for repentance, and the eventual gentile mission. Two chapters then examined Luke's presentation of Jesus' conflicts with opponents and disciples. Chapter 3 argued that Jesus' conflicts with opponents are not simply polemical and denunciatory but contain elements that suggest Luke's desire to persuade non-Christian Jews and to instruct Christian readers in the proper posture of confrontation with non-Christian Jewish others. Chapter 4 argued that Luke does not portray the disciples as the heroes of the early church; rather, he retains and reshapes much of the Markan critique of the disciples' unbelief even as he presents the disciples as the leaders of the future church. Luke's portrayal of the twelve constitutes an internal critique aimed at correcting problems of arrogance and abuse of money, power, and status in early Christianity.

Chapter 5 argued that Luke's doubly critical posture toward Jesus' opponents and his disciples becomes intelligible when these groups are conceived not in contrast to one another but as jointly confronted by Jesus. The confrontation of Jesus with his opponents and his followers takes place along two historical horizons: the first coming

of Jesus upon Israel at the climactic end of his earthly life and the second coming of Jesus upon the church, Israel, and the world at the eschaton. Through an examination of Luke's shaping of the gospel traditions in the travel narrative, I argued that Luke seeks to position the early church alongside non-Christian Jews in a posture of repentance and sober expectation of the crisis of the coming end. Chapter 6 examined Luke's portrayal of the events of the first crisis, attending to the question of responsibility for the death of Jesus and Luke's resumption of the motifs of division and repentance among the people. Here I argued that the end of Luke's gospel, particularly when read in light of the later speeches of Acts, presents the elements of an extended kerygmatic encounter between Jesus and Israel in anticipation of the coming eschatological judgment. Moreover, Luke shapes the narrative of this encounter in order to affect the church's conception and praxis of a kerygmatic encounter with non-Christian Jews and, perhaps, to persuade non-Christian Jewish readers. These conclusions, if correct, have significant implications.

7.2 Modeling Identity Formation

In contrast to other approaches to early Christian identity formation, this study has not offered a theoretical model for the way in which identities take shape. It has been occupied, instead, with the more modest goal of inductively discerning Luke's portrayal of Christian and non-Christian Jewish identities as these stand in relation to

one another. But this relation in Luke, upon close examination, constitutes an important counterpoint to the tendency to regard early Christian identity formation as a process dependent on the denigration of Jewish others. Peter Ochs expresses this tendency when he speaks of the first epoch of Jewish Christian relations as the “epoch of communal self-definition over against the other,” in which “the church defined itself to a great extent by its differences from rabbinic and Israelite Judaisms.”¹ However appropriate this characterization may be for some sectors of early Jewish Christian relations, the present study argues that it does not hold for the Gospel of Luke or, to the degree that we have been able to consider it in this work, for the Acts of the Apostles. Rather, Luke characterizes the early church and early non-Christian Jewish communities by the relations they sustain to Jesus, both in his earthly life and in his anticipated future coming. Both groups sustain a connection to Israel, God’s special people (Lk 1:68, 77; 7:16), and this connection to historical Israel is retained even when the Christian movement begins to welcome gentiles (Lk 7:3-5; Acts 10:1-2, 22, 15:16-17). Both groups encounter continual calls to discipleship in anticipation of a future judgment (Lk 12:45-47, 14:12-14, 26-27, 33; 13:6-9). Neither group is presented in a morally flat manner; there are positive and negative exemplars in both communities (Lk 4:28-30, 23:50-53; Acts 5:1-

¹ Peter Ochs and David F. Ford, “The Third Epoch: The Future of Discourse in Jewish-Christian Relations,” in *Challenges in Jewish-Christian Relations*, ed. James K. Aitken and Edward Kessler (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 154.

11, 33-39, 17:10-12, 28:21-22), and two of Luke's major characters, Peter and Paul, serve both positive and negative exemplary functions (Lk 9:20, 22:55-62; Acts 7:58, 9:1, 20:32-35). These parallels hardly conform to a model of Christianity as a nascent religion defining itself through socio-theological identity struggle against outsiders. The failure of the model articulated by Gaston, Gager, and Ochs to account for the dynamics of identity portrayal in such an influential text as Luke-Acts suggests a serious limitation in dominant theories of identity formation.²

Luke's theological conception of identity, both of Christians and of non-Christian Jews, appears to be dependent not upon a struggle for communal self-definition but upon the relation each group sustains to Jesus as he is understood in the narrative of his suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, and future coming. It is in their connection to Jesus, not to one another, that Luke commends or critiques the characters of his gospel. This perspective reveals, perhaps unsurprisingly, the degree to which Luke's thought has been shaped by the gospel he narrates. The observation that Jesus is the measure of social identity in Luke's thought, may call into question a key claim of Boyarin—namely that the “partition of Judaeo-Christianity” was imposed from the outside by acts of heresiological contradistinction beginning in the second century C.E. Boyarin is correct that the beginning of the consolidation of “orthodox” Christian doctrine in the second

² An alternative theoretical suggestion, which amounts to a less dogmatic approach to the question, was suggested in Chapter 1 in reference to the works of Volf and Gruen.

century was connected with the contradistinction of the emerging Christian faith from certain Jewish rejections of that faith. But this does not mean that what preceded Justin's heresiological project of constructing orthodoxy was "once a territory without border lines," a social and theological space in which identity was shared and uncontested.³

Rather, in the tradition preserved and shaped by Luke, the sayings and stories of Jesus create division within Jewish life. This division may not have had a clear social expression in the latter decades of the first century. The work of Bauer and others reminds us that a substantial diversity characterized early Christian belief and practice, and the polemics of the second century suggest that Christian heresiologists had a fair amount of cognitive dissonance to resolve. But the germ of an eventual division is clearly present in claims Luke's gospel makes precisely in the realm of christology. Though, as Boyarin's erudite work demonstrates, one could be both a practicing Jew and a devout follower of Jesus in the early centuries of the Christian movement, one could not, whether one was a Jew or a gentile, be both a follower and despiser of Jesus. There were doubtless more ambivalent postures, as Luke's portrait of Gamaliel reminds us, and there were various understandings of what it meant to follow Jesus. But Luke's vision demonstrates the degree to which the identity of Jesus could become a totalizing theological issue, one that distinguished those who identified with Jesus from everyone

³ Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 1.

else, at least in principle. In the eyes of at least one tradent of the canonical gospel traditions, then, Christian identity thus seems to have been understood as having a particularity and distinctiveness that was essential. The primary contrast, as Luke depicts it, is not between Jesus' followers and non-Christian Jews, but between Jesus' followers and everyone else: "Whoever does not gather with me scatters" (11:23).

7.3 Contact, Persuasion, and Incommensurability

One remarkable feature of Luke's writings, to which this study has drawn attention, is the paradoxical combination of two aspects of Luke's relation to non-Christian Jews. On the one hand, his gospel presents a deep difference between Luke's view of Jesus and rival accounts of his identity and significance (13:26-28, 19:27). On the other hand, Luke presents the gospel narrative as the fulfillment of the divine promises to Israel (1:1), and the death and resurrection of Jesus as the fulfilment of Jewish hopes (24:26, 44-48), particularly as held among the sect of the Pharisees in their teaching on resurrection (Acts 23:6, 24:15, 28:20). Much scholarship on Luke's relation to Jews has highlighted one of these aspects to the neglect of the other or else deconstructed the one

in light of the other.⁴ But the two strains of Luke's theological vision are equally authentic, and this requires us to think more closely about their relation to one another.

Drawing upon the philosophical work of Alasdair MacIntyre on epistemology and the discourses of traditions, Kavin Rowe has argued forcefully that the traditioned nature of theological speech in early Christianity limits our ability to compare the terms of discourse and thought in one tradition with those in its rivals.⁵ Rowe's insistence that we reckon with the difference between traditions when seeking to compare them thus raises a potential objection to my construal of Luke's work as an attempt at rapprochement with non-Christian Judaism. To take one example, how could Luke present a point of shared belief regarding the resurrection of the dead between Paul and non-Christian Pharisees of the Sanhedrin when the council rejects the event that Luke is convinced is the archetypal instance of that belief? To this question Luke might answer that Paul's proclamation of Jesus' resurrection did not immediately bring to fruition a full agreement between Paul and the Pharisees; rather, it provided a point of contact

⁴ Brawley, for example, so stresses Luke's positive view of the Pharisees that they become a proxy for honor and status and a means of legitimating Jesus (*Luke-Acts and the Jews*, 106). The deconstructive analyses of Sanders and Tyson are discussed in Chapter 1.

⁵ See especially Rowe, *One True Life*, 175-258; cf. Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice, Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1988); idem, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. 3rd Ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

that, he hoped, would lead to repentance from error and acceptance of Paul's distinctive perspective on the resurrection. Rowe rightly observes that in Acts 23:6-7 Paul does not become "christologically specific" in his kerygmatic encounter with the rival Pharisees, but the passage does not simply show Paul's shrewdness in defending himself; he is, in fact, nearly torn to pieces as a result of what he says (Acts 23:10). Rather, Luke's point seems to be that the very best articulations of Jewish hope have been brought to fruition in the central event of the gospel message. Luke, like his character Paul, knows that non-Christian Pharisees do not accept this claim—that "resurrection" does not mean the same thing for Paul as for the Pharisees of the council. The provocative paradox that Luke underscores for his readers is that non-Christian Pharisaic Judaism articulates elements of Christian hope without perceiving their deeper significance (cf. 2Cor 3:15).

The effect of accentuating points of contact between Christian claims and the Jewish tradition in which they are rooted but which nevertheless rejects those claims is not only to indicate differences but also provide access to one tradition from the other. I suggest that this is what Luke hoped to accomplish among non-Christian Jewish readers through his emphasis upon the continuity between Jewish hopes and Christian fulfilment (Lk 1:68, 72, 7:16, 13:35, 24:25-26; Acts 2:16-36, 13:32, 23:6, 24:15, 28:17, 20). Yet these points of connection work in the other direction as well. Christian readers, both Jewish and gentile, would see in these statements an encouragement to make a connection not only with biblical Israel but also with the religious life of contemporary

Jews. Luke's narrative thus draws lines of connection between Luke's conception of Christian identity and his conception of Jewish identity, and these connections may have provided an avenue for meaningful dialogue with non-Christian Jews of Luke's day and granted a measure of hope that at least some might be persuaded to convert.

7.4 Luke's Call for Jewish Conversion and the Question of Anti-Judaism

In his widely influential study of Paul, E.P. Sanders concludes that what Paul found wrong with the Judaism of his day was not any particular element of its theological or practical existence but rather the simple fact that it was not Christianity—that it had not undergone the reorientation in light of the Christ event that Paul himself had undergone.⁶ The same may be said for Luke. If the thesis of this book is correct, Luke also appears to have shared Paul's hope for the conversion of non-Christian Jews, despite Jewish resistance to the church's missionary efforts. In view of this construal of Luke's orientation to non-Christian Jews, we may reflect briefly on how this call for conversion should be evaluated in light of the claim that Luke's gospel endorses anti-Judaism.

⁶ E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 552.

After nearly two millennia of polemic and bloodshed, the claim that Jews should to believe in Jesus as the Jewish messiah is felt by many contemporary thinkers to be patronizing and deeply offensive. Rosemary Ruether puts the central question of early Jewish Christian relations pointedly: "Is it possible to say 'Jesus is Messiah' without, implicitly or explicitly, saying at the same time 'and the Jews be damned'?"⁷ As Ruether rightly recognizes, "The most fundamental affirmation of Christian faith is the belief that Jesus is the Christ...To ask about this affirmation is to ask about the keystone of Christian faith."⁸ It is the claim of this book that Luke's answer to Ruether's question about affirming Jesus without damning Jews is "yes," since the eschaton has not yet come and the Christian mission to the Jews continues, despite the poor return on its investment. This answer, which understands Luke to hold out hope for the salvation of Jews through Jesus, is rejected by Amy-Jill Levine, who understands the very notion of a totalizing christological truth claim in Luke to be inherently offensive: "With opening scenes of sentimental piety, Luke lulls readers into a sense of respect for what might be called 'the Jewish religion.' But the reader reads on in the Gospel, where the good news of Jesus becomes bad news for any Jewish religion."⁹ Luke's news about Jesus is bad,

⁷ Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, 246.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Levine, "Luke and the Jewish Religion," 402.

Levine suggests, because of his insistence upon the central significance of Jesus in matters of religion. For Luke,

Torah's ultimate function is not to teach *halakhah*. Rather, it is to testify to Jesus' life and death and the mission in his name.... Whatever practice, theology, ritual, salvation history, or hermeneutic is available must, for Luke, culminate in Jesus. If it does not, it is incomplete or illegitimate.¹⁰

What is wrong with Luke's version of Christianity, on this view, is that it reorganizes the various elements of religion around the totalizing conviction that Jesus is the Christ. By this reorganization, it renders other organizations of theology and life "illegitimate."

For Levine, it is Luke's claim that is illegitimate, and modern readers should reject it, at least in part: "Because religion need not be a zero-sum game, both Jews and Christians can each find meaning, or inspiration, or profundity in the practices and beliefs of the other."¹¹ As nice as this sounds—and as much as the present Christian writer has been profoundly affected by the aesthetic and spiritual vision of religious Jews—it is unclear whether Levine's trans-religious vision of mutual appreciation really allows for Jews, Christians, or anyone else to hold in earnest any particular belief upon

¹⁰ Ibid., 399.

¹¹ Ibid., 401.

which they do not agree, for such unshared convictions about the definite shape of religious truth may, at least implicitly, render the religious vision of the other “incomplete or illegitimate.” Indeed, we may ask whether Levine’s religious protest against Luke’s gospel on the grounds of the particularity of his christological vision and of the corollary non-affirmation of rival visions amounts to a principled rejection of any attempt to identify a particular religious claim as universally true and its contrary false. In any case, the claim that religion is an essentially pluralistic phenomenon that excludes definite claims about truth is hardly self-evident, though it may be widely accepted.

The problem of Christian history with Jews is, arguably, not the Christian conviction that Jesus is the Christ but the question of whether the rejection of that claim by Jews requires, from the Christian side, a response of violence. As the writers of *Dabru Emet* observe, the atrocities of the twentieth century were enabled by persons and social structures laying claim to a Christian legitimation, but these atrocities were not themselves the inevitable outworking of Christian beliefs. It is possible, these writers are convinced, for people with deep differences over matters of religion to live with one another without violence. This is a project toward which peaceable Jews, Christians, Muslims, and other people of goodwill have been and will continue working without denying the real and often deep differences that make life together challenging. Such differences, Luke’s narrative presses us to conclude, need not lead us to annihilate one another or to discontinue the conversations that our deepest convictions generate.

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Biography

David Smith was born in Texas in 1981. He studied at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Engineering in 2005. He married Tosha Woods in 2005. After working in the biomedical engineering field, he attended Westminster Theological Seminary, where he was a George Sinclair Scholar and the recipient of the Greene Prize, completing a Master of Arts in Religion in biblical studies in 2010. He completed a Master of Theology degree at Duke Divinity School in 2012 before enrolling in the Graduate Program in Religion at Duke University. As a doctoral student at Duke, he has been the recipient of a GPR Departmental Fellowship, a Graduate School Summer Research Fellowship, Summer Research Fellowships from the Kearns Family Foundation, a Kearns Family Grant for International Conference Travel, a James B. Duke International Research Fellowship, and a Doctoral Student Residential Fellowship at the University of Notre Dame Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem. He is a member of the James B. Duke Society of Fellows. He has published two articles: ““No Poor Among Them”: Sabbath and Jubilee Years in Lukan Social Ethics” in *Horizons in Biblical Theology*, and ““A Servant in God’s House”: Competing Roles of Moses in 1 Clement and the Epistle to the Hebrews,” in *The Christian Moses: From Philo to the Qur’an* (forthcoming from the Catholic University of America Press). David and Tosha have a daughter, Zoe Clementine, a son, Ari Benedict, and a dog, Rufus.